

LI
SERMONS,

Preached by the Reverend

D^r. Mark Frank,

Master of *Pembroke* Hall in *Cambridge*, Archdeacon
of St. *Albans*, Prebend, and Treasurer
of St. *Pauls*, &c.

BEING

A Course of Sermons,

Beginning at

Advent, and so continued through the *Festivals*.

To which is added,

A Sermon Preached at ST. PAULS CROSS,
in the Year Forty One,

And then Commanded to be Printed

By King CHARLES the First.

Idem & Sermo & Vita.

LONDON,

Printed by *Andrew Clark* for *John Martyn*, *Henry Brome*, and
Richard Chiswell, and are to be sold by *Jonathan Edwin*,
at the *Three Roses* in *Ludgate Street*, 1672.

To the most Reverend Father in God,

GILBERT,

Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*, his Grace,

*Sheldon.
Consecr. London. 1660
Transl. to Canterbury 1663.*

Primate of All *England*, and Metropolitan, one of
His Majesties Most Honourable Privy Council, &c.

May it please your Grace,



Hough by that infinite distance I am in
to your Grace, I ought to make all
the Apologies in the world for this
Attempt; yet when I reflect upon
your own admired Candour in re-
ceiving the most inferiour Addresses, and my
own Duty in making this, I need not, I hope,
use a Complement to excuse that, which I nei-
ther could, nor ought not, but to have done.
For the Author of these Sermons, had that Re-
lation to your Grace, and your self that Favour
for him, that no other name is so fit, or so wor-
thy to prefix to any thing of his as your Graces.
And besides, I may very reasonably suppose,
that there may be something in the following
Papers, that may not be unfit to be offered to
such a Personage. I humbly therefore pray, that
either the one, or the other may excuse the
forwardness of this Dedication. As to my own
very great obligations to your Grace, I will not
be so Conceited as to mention them. For when
I have told so Publick, I need not add any
Private Reasons. And besides, it may be look-
ed upon by the World as a design to gain a
A 2 Repu-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Reputation to my self, by talking of Favours
from a Person of such Eminence. Yet I beg
that I may have leave to say, that I reckon it
my greatest Honour, in having the Advantage of
presenting this Offering, which ought to be made
to your Grace, by

Your Graces

Meanest and most Dutiful

Servant

Thomas Pomfret.

TO THE
READER.



Though I do not call, I suppose Thee judicious, and shall therefore give to Thee, and to my self the ease of saying little. For I am sensible enough, that the Author of these following Sermons will be to all that read them, so much his own Advocate, that they will not want any Orator in the Preface. And to those that read them not, he said nothing, nor shall I. Passing then by on purpose those Artifices of Procuring a fair reception to the Book, by the ordinary Pageantry of Commendations; I think it will be enough to assure Thee, that as the Author left the Copies fairly writ by his own hand, so they come as truly his to thine. For this Reverend Person doing me the Honour of leaving me his Executor, by that I had the Possession and Care of all his Papers. And amongst them, These I found to be so worthy of the Publick, that I concluded it a Trespass against the common interest to keep them in my own hands. But that too which made me the more confident of their value, was the earnestness of many, and to that the Approbation of as great a Person as the Church has any, for their Impression. And accordingly I did forthwith upon the Doctors death, committ the Copies to a Stationer, who very disingeniously for some years delayed, and at last utterly refused (for what ends I

To the Reader.

know not) the Printing them. But retring them from him, I have put them now into honest mens hands, from whence I hope they will come well corrected into thine. And then I am very confident they will speak enough for themselves, and need no more from him who is

Thy humble Servant

Thomas Pomfret.

IMPRIMATUR

*Hic Liber cui Titulus, A Course
of Festival Sermons, Preached
by Dr. Frank,*

June 29.
1670.

SAM. PARKER.

A SERMON ON

The First Sunday in Advent.

S. MATTH. xxi. 9.

And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord! Blessed is any coming and going that comes so: *Hosanna* to him, God bless him, or *Hosanna* for him; God be blessed for him, whoe're he be. All *that went before*, and all *that follow*, all men will say so.

And yet *in Nomine Domini incipit omne malum*, said Luther once, *In the Name of the Lord begins all the mischief*. (And we still find it so) the whole game of mischief begun and carried on in *nomine Domini*, under the Name of God, as the Lords work. How should we do then to discern the right in *Nomine Domini*, when he that comes in the Name of the Lord, comes truly so? Many ways peradventure may be given to know it by; but this is the shortest: If *the multitudes that went before, and that followed after*, cry *Hosanna* to him, if the *Saints* of former Ages and their successours approve the manner of his coming, if it be in a way the Church of Christ has from its first beginning allow'd for Christian; that is, if he come meek and lowly, humbly riding upon an Ass, with Palms and Olives, the ensigns of Peace and Love; then he comes in *nomine Domini* right; but if proud and scornful, with Horse and Chariot, Sword and Spear, instead of Olive Boughs and Branches, with a Sword to cut in sunder the bond of Peace and Unity, and a Spear to keep off Charity: Let him cry out in *nomine Domini*, talk of the Lord, and take his name into his mouth never so much, 'tis but a meer *in nomine*, and no more, a meer pretence and name, no *Domini*, nothing in it really of God; nor the multitudes before, nor the multitudes that follow, nor any of the Primitive Christians ever sung *Hosanna*, gave any blessing or approbation to such comers or their comings. He that comes here in the Text, came nothing so; and he that will come after him, must not come so; *Hosanna* to no such.

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But

But *Hosanna* to him that truly comes in the name of the Lord: Gods blessing with him. To him that comes so in the *Text*, to the Son of David, to him no question. 'Tis the business, both *Text* and Time, the words in hand, the days in hand, the days of holy *Advent* are to teach us, to sing *Hosanna's* to our Saviour, to bless God for his coming, to bless him for his coming, all his comings, all his ways of coming to us; to bless his day that is a coming, whence all his other comings come: to bless him in the highest, with heart and tongue, and hand, to the highest we can go, that he may also bless us for it in the highest.

That it might be done the better, *Holy Church* has design'd four *Sundays* to prepare us for it, wherein to tune our pipes, and fit our instruments and voices to sing *Hosanna* in the right key, the highest pitch, to praise God as is fitting for Christs coming.

A business sure well worth the doing, and some good time for it worth the observing, if we either think him worth it, that is here spoke of as coming, or his coming worth it. Indeed the coming in the *Text* is not the coming of that Feast that is now a coming, but it is one of the ways prescribed by the *Church* for our better coming to the Feast, by preparing with these multitudes some boughs and branches, some *Hosanna's* and *Benedictus's*, some provision of holy thoughts and divine affections for it. They that went before, and they that followed in the *Text*, sung *Hosanna* for a lesser coming of Christs, then that was in the flesh: we may well do it for a greater; especially making this in the *Text* a degree or note to ascend to that, one coming to usher to the other; the humility of his coming to *Jerusalem*, a way to exalt the greater humility of his coming into the world. And we have the multitudes before, and the multitudes that follow, all *Patriarchs* before rejoicing with Father *Abraham* at his day, and all the *Fathers* since; all that went before or follow'd since his coming, former and later Christians for our example. They all in their several Generations thought fit yearly to remember it, and so long, even four *Advent Sundays* together, to prepare the multitudes and people for it; that so by preaching to them the way and manner of all Christs comings, they might 1. perfectly be instructed who it was and is, that truly comes blessed in the name of the Lord, and not be deceived by pretenders and pretences: and 2. also truly and duly give the blessing where it ought, sing the *Hosanna* when, and where, and to whom we should, celebrate the memory of Christs coming right, and *Hosanna* it as is meet.

Thus did all that went before; and 'tis fit they that come after should do as much, unless they were wiser or better than all that went afore them. And all will do it, but those who are afraid to have their comings discovered to be no comings in the name of the Lord by the unlikeness of their comings; afraid to lose their *in nomine*, the name however, to have the multitudes that follow them fall off from them, if they should be taught by day, or time, or *Text*, how far different their ways and comings are, from the humble lowly comings and ways of Christ, whose name they so much pretend to come in, though their own name be the only name they truly come for.

Better example we have here before us, and by Gods blessing we will bless with them; follow them in blessing Christ, both himself and coming, in the time and manner all that have followed him ever did it. And to do it the better, and more according to *Text* and time, let us consider,

- I. Who they were that here blest Christ for his coming. *The multitudes*

tititudes that went before , and that followed , both of them says the Text.

II. What was their way of blessing, how they did it, *ὡς ὅτε* says the *Evangelist*, they cried, cried it aloud.

III. Their Song of Blessing, what they cried, *Hosanna to the Son of David : Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord , Hosanna in the highest.*

When we have throughly considered these particulars, there will remain nothing but a word of Exhortation to follow them that thus go before us; as they cried it and sung it before, so we still to cry it and sing it after them. I begin with the persons, that we may in the first place know whom it is we follow, the *multitudes that went before , and that followed.*

And that to the Letter is no more then those companies of people, Men, Women, and Children who went out to *Mount Olivet* to meet our *Saviour* at his coming to *Jerusalem*, when he came riding thither upon an *Ass*, some of them before him, some behind him, crying out *Hosanna*.

Many they were it seems, and not a single multitude neither, *ὄχλοι*, multitudes in the plural, several multitudes that did it; and though it be no argument to prove any thing good or lawful, because the multitudes do it; yet when the multitudes do good, 'tis good to take some notice of it: nay when so many do it, it looks the better. The Song of praise sounds never better then *in the great Congregation , and among much people*. The Musick never sweeter in the ears of Heaven, then when the Choir is fullest; a good note to teach us to fill Holy Assemblies, to bear our parts in the Congregation.

And in this Congregation 2. the Musick it seems has all its keys and voices: Men, Women, and Children, all sing their parts: no Sex or Age to think themselves exempted from bearing part in Gods Service: though the *Apostle* will not suffer Women to preach and teach, he will give them leave to sing and pray, to answer the Responses, *Antiphones*, and Versicles, the Hymns and Psalms; the little Children too to learn betimes to lisp them out: no better seasoning of their mouths then with Prayers and Praises to their Redeemer.

Nor 3. were these multitudes meerly the rout of people; there were men of all conditions in them, though it may be not many *Josephs* or *Nicodemus's*, yet some no doubt; so many of the Rulers having had their sick Servants or Wives or Children healed by him. There are none too good or great for Gods Service. 'Tis no disparagement to any mans honour to be among those multitudes that go out at any time to meet *Jesus*, no dishonour to say *Amen* with the meanest in them, to joyn with them in any part or point of Gods Service. You may remember the nobility of the *Bereans* above the *Thessalonians*, is by the Scripture Heraldry placed in this, that *they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily*, Acts xvii. 11. in short, were more religious and devout, and earnest in the way of Christ, to worship him then the other.

Nor 4. were these multitudes Choirs of *Priests* and *Clerks*, or only Orders of Religious men; it was a Congregation of *Seculars*, though there were *Priests* and *Apostles* in it: 'tis St. *Chrysostoms* own note, to tell us, men are not to put off the work of Devotion and Religion wholly to the *Priest* and *Clerk*, as if they only were to sing the *Benedictus*, *Hosanna's*, or *Allelujahs*, and the multitudes only stand looking on; or think men in some Religious Orders were only oblig'd to live orderly and

like Christians, all secular or lay-men as they pleas'd. *Non ita sane, non ita est*, says he, *It is not so indeed, it is not so: Hoc plane est quod evertit orbem universum.* 'Tis this. *It is plainly this*, this false opinion or fancy, *that ruins all the world.* Behold the multitudes here going before, crying, and the multitudes following after, answering them in their *Hosanna to the Son of David*, all ranks of people, the most secular, so religious grown since Christs coming. 'Tis to be fear'd he is going from us, or will be quickly, if we omit our parts, if we forget our duties, if we once begin to think too much of bearing part or share in his Service, either in the Congregation, or out of it.

But 5. however, they that pretend to go out to meet Christ, to have more sense of Devotion, and Zeal to it then others, they above all surely will be easily heard in their *Hosanna's* or *Benedictus*. The more devout we are, we sing the louder; the more earnest we be to meet our Lord, the more welcome will we give him, the higher gratulations and acclamations to him. Whoever fail in their parts, methinks such should not. If we pretend to love him more then others, then more prayers and praises to him then others: if we love him more, they will be more, and we will not be ashamed to profess it in the multitude, nor think much to be in the multitude among the meanest or poorest at it.

Surely not, seeing 6. the *Jews* themselves think not much to do so, seeing them so ready, so eager, so violent, in giving honour to him; can it be expected that Christians should be behind? but they before, and we not behind? Too much it is that they before and we behind; it should be rather, we before and they behind: though they got the start in time to get before us, we should sure in measure get it, go there before them. Christ came to them, and they go out to meet him: He comes to us, and we go from him. He came to them at this time with a sad message of destruction, and therefore weeps in the mount of his triumph to look upon the City, and yet they entertain him with *Hosanna's*. Blessed be the name of the Lord: so come things to pass. He comes to us with tidings of great joy, such the *Angels* term it, his Birth no other coming; yet we think much to sing *Hosanna's* for it, to keep a day of praise, or a song of praise, or a face and garb of praise: the more unchristian they that do so, less sensible of Christs favours then the very multitude, then the Jew himself. Rare Christians the while, that think no better, speak no better, rejoyce no better at Christs coming, at his greatest and most gracious coming.

I cannot say this multitude to the Letter, and in the Story are any unanswerable argument for our *Hosanna's*. Yet when a multitude does well, 'tis good to follow them: but take it now 2. in the mystery, and there needs no greater to persuade us.

The multitudes *before* are in the mystery, the Holy *Patriarchs*, and *they that followed* are the *Prophets*. Now what the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets* have rejoyc'd at, that must we. *Abraham*, says Christ himself, *rejoyced to see my day, he saw it and was glad.* Yes, your Father *Abraham* was glad. He was glad to see Christ a coming, *S. John viii. 56.* The *Prophets* are every where full of joyful expressions, at the mention of the *Messias* coming; their eyes lookt, and their hearts long'd for him: and the *Prophet Zachary* calls to us to tell it out with Joy, to the Daughter of *Sion*, tells punctually even of this very joy and coming too, *Zach. ix. 9.* And *what was written before time*, either by *Patriarch* or *Prophet*, *was written for our learning*, says the *Apostle*, *Rom. xv. 4.* We may do what they did, what they would have us.

Or

Or 2. The multitudes before in the mystery are the *Jews*, the multitudes that follow are the *Gentiles*. Both bidden by the *Apostle* to rejoyce, *Rom. xv. 10. Rejoyce ye Gentiles with his people, his people, the Jews, before, and the Gentiles behind, all shall rejoyce in his salvation: for glory is now coming to the Jews, glory to his people Israel, and light unto the Gentiles, to light them by his coming. So sang old Simeon in his Song, S. Luke ii. 32.*

3. The multitudes before is the *Jewish Synagogue*, the multitudes behind the *Christian Church*; a multitude indeed that cannot be numbred, *Revel. vii. 9. of Emperours, and Kings, and Princes; Bishops and Priests, Doctors, Martyrs, Confessors, and Virgins, all in their severall Orders and Generations, crying, Hosanna to the Son of David, the whole world gone after him. Before indeed only, Notus in Judea Deus, God only known in Fury, Psal. lxxvi. 1. his coming only talkt of in Israel, but after quam admirabile nomen tuum in universa terra! Psal. viii. 1. O Lord our Governour, how wonderful or excellent is thy name in all the world. All these multitudes, the Jew with his multitude of Patriarchs, Priests, and Levites, and Singers, and Prophets, with his Sacrifices of Bulls and Rams, and Goats, and Sheep, of Types and Figures, all crying out Messiah's coming. The Christians, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Doctors, Virgins, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and all severall Orders in their Choirs and Churches throughout the world, crying out he is come; all the corners of the earth resounding out Hosanna's and Allelujahs to him. Una est fides pracedentium atque sequentium populorum, says St. Gregory; all believing and professing the same he that cometh here; they the *Jews* before crying he that cometh; we the *Christians* crying he that is come, or rather he that cometh still, that every day comes to us by his Grace, and through his Word, and in his Sacraments: Blessed is he that cometh still, not a tence or tittle chang'd; he that comes being the same for ever, eternity and things eternal being ever coming, never gone or going.*

So now the Congregation is full, what should we do but begin our Service? when we have *Law*, and *Prophets*, and *Gospel* to countenance and bear us company in our *Te Deum* and *Benedictus*, at our Prayers and Praises; in our Joys and Festivals, all of them crying nothing but *Christ*, nothing but *Christ*, blessed be he, blessed be he, and blessed be his coming, and blessed be his day, and blessed be his deeds; the whole practice of all Christian Churches and Congregations, that ever were gathered together in nomine Domini, in the name of the Lord, till these meer nominal verbal Christians that are afraid of the name of him that cometh, of the name of *Jesus*, of blessing it or bowing at it; all Christians, all that came before in the name of Christ, till these pretenders that follow no body but their own fancies; all agreeing in the same welcome to their Redeemer, joyning in the same prayers and praises: what should we do but add our voices and sing with them? better sure with the multitudes before and behind, the whole multitude of *Saints* of so many Ager, then with a few scattered headless heedless companies forbear it; better pray and praise with them, then prattle and prate with these; better their *Hosanna* and *Benedictus* to him that cometh in the name of the Lord, then these mens senseless Sermons and Discourses, who come in their own name, and of their own heads, without Gods sending them at all. Having then so full a Choir, so many voices to bear us company, let us also now sing with them.

Yet that we may be sure to sing in Tune, let's first listen a little to the key and note they blefs in: 'Tis a loud one, for 'tis a crying; they cried: not
in

in the sense we often take it, for a mournful tone or note (for 'tis an expression of joy and gladness. So *S. Luke xix. 37. They began to rejoyce, &c.*) but with a loud voice it was they praised him, that's the meaning, so expressed in the same *verse* by that *Evangelist*.

Indeed true it is, God has turn'd our songs of joy into the voice of weeping (as the *Prophet* complains) taken away our Feasts and gaudy days; and we may well cry, and cry aloud in that sadder sense of the word crying: yet for all that, must we not lay down the other, or forget the Song of prayer and praise, especially upon the point of *Christs* coming to us. Here it must be crying in another tone, singing, speaking, proclaiming the great favour and honour of him *that cometh in the name of the Lord*. Blessing, and honour, and glory to him that so cometh. Now that we be not out in tune or note, let's mind the word, we shall find the sweetest ways of blessing in it.

1. 'Tis a loud crying, such is *ὑψωσις*, and that teaches us to be devout and earnest in our prayers and praises, in blessing *Christ*.

2. 'Tis loud and to be heard, to instruct us not to be ashamed of our way of serving *Christ*; he that is, *Christ* will be ashamed of him: so *Christ* professes, *S. Mark viii. 38*.

3. 'Tis the crying of a multitude, many multitudes, and intimates to us what prayer and praise does best, even the Publick and Common Service.

4. 'Tis the crying of several multitudes, the same thing, and insinuates peace and unity; that's the only Christian way of praising God: one God, and one Faith, and one *Christ*, says the *Apostle*, and one heart and mind of all that profess them; and 'twere best one way of doing it; the same *Hosanna*, the same *Benedictus*, the same voice and form of prayer and praise, and Worship, if it could be had.

5. 'Tis of some before, and some that follow; 'tis not a confused or disorderly note, or way, hudling and confounding all together, but the voice of Order, where every one sings in time, in tune, and place; some begin and others follow, and the *Chorus* joyns, all in decency and order: this to preach decency and order to them that come in at any time, or call any where upon the name of *Christ*; even the very multitude here in *Christs* praise keep their parts and order.

6. 'Tis a crying, yet of joy we told you, the voice of mirth and gladness, that we may know *Christ* is best served with a chearful spirit. Christianity is no such dull heavy thing as some have fancied it, it admits of Mirth and Songs, so they be *in nomine Domini*, either to the praise of God, or not to his dishonour, so they be not light, or wanton, or scurrilous, or such like.

7. This crying here is general, and our praises of God must be so too; all that is without me, and *all that is within me praise his holy name*: all the powers of my soul, superiour and inferiour, all the organs of my body, all the instruments of my life and living, my estate and means, all to concur in giving praise to God, in celebrating the mercies, the humilities, the condescensions, the out-goings and in-comings of my Redeemer.

Thus we have the key and tune of blessing God and *Christ* devoutly, confidently, publickly, unanimously, orderly, chearfully, and universally, with all our faculties and powers. Let's now hear the Song of praise, *Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is he, &c.* And that we may sing in tune, let's know our parts.

Three parts there are in it as in other Songs, *Bassus*, *Tenor*, and *Altus*,
the

the *Bass*, the *Tenor*, and the *Treble*. *Hosanna to the Son of David*, there's the *Bass*, the deepest and lowest note, the humanity of Christ *in filio David*, being *the Son of David*; the *Bass* sings that, that's low indeed for him, we can go no lower. *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, there's the *Tenor* or middle part, he and the name of the *Lord* joyn'd together, God and Man united, that's a note higher then the first, the Mediator between God and Man; God in the highest, Son of *David* in the lowest; the middle note then follows. And *Hosanna in altissimis*, the *Altus* or *Treble*, the highest note of all, we can reach no higher, strain we never so high.

We begin low, that's the way to reach high; *Hosanna to the Son of David*: Yet as low as it is, 'tis hard to hit, hard to reach the meaning of it. *Hosanna* a hard note, so Interpreters have found it.

St. *Augustine* will have it an Interjection only, to express rejoycing, like that *ἰὸ Ναννα* among the *Greeks*, or *Io triumphe* among the *Latines*. The truth is, 'tis an expression and voice of joy and gladness, though no Interjection: an expression us'd by the Jews at the Feast of *Tabernacles*, a joyful acclamation, enough to authorize common and received expressions of joy, though it may be they that use them do not perfectly understand them; especially joy inexpressible (such as ours should be for the Son of *David's* coming) may be allow'd to express it self as it can, or as it does in other rejoycings, when it can do no better.

Some interpret it Redemption, others an Hymn, or Praise, others Grace, others Glory, others Boughs to the Son of *David*: All yet concur in this, that 'tis a joyful wish for prosperity to Christ under the title of the Son of *David*; Grace, Redemption, Praise, and Glory, Psalms and Hymns, and all the other outward expressions of Thanks, Respect, and Joy be given to him who now comes to restore the Kingdom of his Father *David*. Nothing too much to be given to the *Messiah*, for him they always mean by the Son of *David*: No inward or outward joy enough for the coming of our Redeemer.

But though *Hosanna* mean all these several rendrings, yet the construction is no more then *Salvum fac*, or *salva obsecro*, Save we beseech thee, like our *Vivat Rex*, God save the King. Save the Son of *David* we beseech thee, and save us by the Son of *David*. For both it is: A prayer to God to preserve and prosper him, that he may have good luck with his honour, and ride on; and a prayer to God to save and deliver us by and through him, or to him to do it, *salva obsecro*, O *fili David*, O *fili* for *filio*. Save us we pray thee, O Son of *David*.

By this time you understand *Hosanna* to be both a prayer and a thanksgiving, a short Collect and a Hymn both, an expression of rejoycing for Christ's coming, with a prayer that it may come happy both to him and us. Thus you have it in *Psal. cxviii. 24, 25.* whence this seems either to be taken or to relate. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoyce and be glad in it*; there's the voice of rejoycing: then follows *נְחִיֵּנוּ הוֹשִׁיעָנוּ ה' הוֹשִׁיעָנוּ* Help me now O Lord, O Lord send us now prosperity: the prayer upon it.

'Tis an easie observation hence, that our rejoycings are to consist in Prayers and Praises, in Hymns and Collects; no true *Hosanna's* to Christ, no true blessing him but so; no keeping *Christmas* or any Feast without them. To spend a day in idleness, or good cheer, is not to keep *Holiday*: To keep *Christmas* is not to fill our mouths with Meat, but our lips with Prayers and Praises; not to sit down and play, but to kneel down and pray; not to rest from work and labour, but by some holy rest and retire-

retirement from temporal labour, to labour so to enter into eternal rest. The business of a *Holiday* is holy business; *Hosanna* business of *Christmas*, *Christ's* coming so to be solemnized with solemn prayers, and praises, and thanksgivings.

And there is more then so in this *Hosanna*. It was the close of certain Prayers and *Litanies* used by the *Jewish Synagogues*; like our *Libera nos Domine*, our *Good Lord deliver us*, in our *Litanies*. They first reckoned up the names of God, God, Lord, King of Kings, &c. and to each *Hosanna*; then his Attributes, his Mercy, Truth, &c. to each *Hosanna*; then what they desired, both in publick and private, and for each *Hosanna*. All resound *Hosanna*, all eccho out *Hosanna*, save, and help, and prosper us. 'Tis no new thing it seems, or of *Papish* Original, to use publick *Litanies*, and *Liturgies*; 'tis but what the *Church* of God has ever had in use, the way from the beginning it always serv'd him in. The very Petitions of the *Lords Prayer* are all taken out of the *Jewish Sedar*, or *Common-Prayer-Book*: and if *Christ* himself who wanted neither words nor Spirit to pray, thought fit yet notwithstanding to make use of received expressions and antient forms; I conceive not why any that profess him, should think themselves wiser then their *Master*, and reject old and accustomed Forms of Prayers and Praise. Yet indeed we cannot well expect they should keep a Form, that will not keep a day to bless him for his coming. We that resolve of this, may be resolv'd of the other, that no way like the old to do it in.

That teaches us to pray the *Messiah* that *Christ* may Reign, that his Kingdom may prosper and be enlarged, that we our selves may be of it, and prosper in it, that we may have Redemption and Salvation, Grace and Glory, sing Hymns and Songs of Praise to him both in his Kingdom here upon Earth, and in his Kingdom in Heaven. This the way of entertaining him at his coming to entertain our selves, and time in blessing him for his goodness, and desiring of his blessing.

And yet besides there is as much Faith as Devotion to be here learn'd from the multitude in this *Hosanna*. There is an acknowledgment of his Office, that he was *Messiah*. They it seems believed it. I suspect they that love not to have a day to mind them of his becoming the *Son of David*, of his Nativity, do scarce believe it: If they thought his coming real, we should have some real doings at it; they would be as busie in it as the best. Were *filio David* well grounded in us, did we really believe him the *Son of David*, we would also become the Sons of *David*, who was a man of Prayer and Praise, sons of Praise, sing *Hosanna's* as fast as any: 'Tis only want of Faith that hinders Works; we believe not in him as we should, what e're we talk, else we would do to him as we should, accept all his comings, even upon our knees, at least with all thankfulness, and such Devotion as time and place required of us.

And 2. we would raise our voices a note higher, add *Benedictus* to *Hosanna*. *Blessed is he that cometh*, &c. Bless God, and bless him, and bless his coming, and bless his goodness, and bless his power, and bless his fulness, and bless his work, and bless his purpose; desire God to bless him, and man to bless him, and also bless our selves in him; for no less then all these is in the words.

Blessed first be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a mighty salvation for us in the house of his Servant David. So old *Zachary*, *S. Luke* i. 68. 69. *Blessed be God the Father for the Son, God the Father for the Son of David's coming to us.*

Blessed

Blessed 2. be the Son, blessed be he that cometh; blessed be *Our Lord Jesus Christ* for his coming; for to him is blessing due; that he would vouchsafe to come and bless: bless the Father for sending; the Son for coming; blessing to them both for thus blessing us.

Blessed 3. be his coming, all his comings, his coming in the Flesh, his coming in the Spirit, his coming in Humility, his coming in Glory: his coming in the Flesh, that's a blessed coming for us, whereby all other blessings come unto us; his coming in the Spirit or by his Grace a blessed coming too, and still daily coming; his coming in Glory, that may be a blessed coming to us too, if we bless him duly for his other comings: if we truly and devoutly rejoyce at his first and second coming, no doubt but we shall also triumph at his last. That he cometh, came, and will come unto the end, is blessed news; we therefore with these multitudes so bless him for it.

Blessed 4. be his goodness, and that's evident enough in his coming to us: bless him for that he would be so good to come, when all good was going from us, when we our selves were gone away from him, run away as far as well we could, that he would come after us.

Blessed 5. be his power and authority, for *in the name of the Lord* he comes, not in his own name; but in the *Fathers* that sent him; *S. John v. 43.* confess, acknowledge, submit to his power and authority; that's the true way to bless him.

Blessed 5. be his greatness and fulness of blessing, blessed be his blessedness, for he is full of blessings; in him all fulness is and dwells, *Col. ii. 9. God blessed for ever*; *Rom. ix. 5.* Let's make this acknowledgment of him, profess and proclaim it as they do here call him, the ever blessed.

Blessed 6. be all his works, actions, and passions, the works of our Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, Glorification, which all come to us only through his Name and Merits. Attribute we all to him and to his Name; *Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name be the praise and glory of all these great and wonderful things.*

Blessed lastly be all his purposes and intentions towards us, he came to reveal his Fathers will unto us; bless him for that: bless we should all such that make known unto us the will of God; *Beati pedes Evangelizantium, Blessed be the feet of the Ministers of the Gospel*; much more this great *Archbishop of our Souls* that sends them. He came to glorify the Father, *S. John viii.* to teach us to do so: bless him for that. He came to save and deliver us from all kind of evil, however we wilfully thrust daily into it, some or other; bless him for that; say all good of him, that wishes and works all good to us: but which is only truly to bless, further we all purposes what we can, and help them forward, that he and we may be glorified by the hand.

For this blessing is not meerly a form of words; we must 1. earnestly and heartily desire God to bless, to bless all Christs ways of coming to us, that we may joyfully, and chearfully, and devoutly entertain him. Desire God 2. to bless him that cometh in his name, him whose he be that he sends to us: but this *Ὁ ἐρχόμενος* especially, that his coming may come abroad to all the world, all come in unto him. Desire 3. that man may bless him, incite the sons of men to sing praise too unto him. *Praise him all ye Nations, praise him all ye people*; strive what we can to get all we come nigh, to come with us, and bear a part in blessing him.

In a word, bless we our selves in him, think, and profess, and pro-
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claim our selves blessed that Christ is come to us, that we have our part and portion in him; place all our joy, all our rejoycing, all our triumph that he is with us, that the *name of the Lord is declared* unto us, that by his coming the name of the *Lord* is called upon us, that we are now of his retinue, that we now belong unto him, that he is daily coming in us.

And for this *Hosanna* now 3. *in excelsis*, indeed, *Hosanna to him in the highest*, sing we it as loud as we can reach, as loud as we can cry it.

And that may pass for the first interpretation of *in excelsis*, that we are to cry it as loud as we can cry it, do what we can to express our joy, how we can to give him thanks, to exalt his praise what we are able, *in excelsis, to the highest* of our power; so *Psal. cxlviii. 1. Praise him in the height.*

We all of us *in excelsis*, in our highest, yea, and 2. the very highest, the very most *in excelsis* of us all, the highest of us, is too low to praise him worthily; yet praise him, O ye highest, ye Kings and Princes of the earth, *Kings of the earth and all people*, *Psal. cxlviii. 11. come down from your excelsis*, and lay your Crowns and Scepters at the feet of this King (as *S. Luke*) that cometh, and submit all your Kingdoms to the Kingdom of Christ; make ye all your Kingdoms to bless his, that your Kingdoms also may be blessed.

Nay, and yet there are higher then these highest, who are to praise him, *Praise him all ye heavens*, *Psal. cxlviii. 4. Praise him all ye Angels*, praise him all his Hosts, *ver. 2. So S. Luke* intimates it when he expresses it, peace on earth, in Heaven, and glory in the highest: glory in Heaven for the peace that is made between Heaven and Earth by him that cometh here in the name of the Lord, by whom says the *Apostle* all things are reconciled, *whether they be things in Earth, or things in Heaven*, *Col. i. 20. Hosanna in the highest*, for this peace with the highest, sung be it by Heaven and Earth, by *Angels* and Men; the *Angels* sung somewhat a like Song at his Birth when he was coming into the world; according as *St. Luke* interprets it, and will sing it again if we invite them as the *Psalmist* does, to sing with us: and we must desire it, that God may be prais'd: all glory both in Heaven and Earth.

That's the way indeed to *Hosanna in the highest*, as it is a Song of Praise: but 'tis also we told you a prayer, that even our praises and the ground of them may continue.

A prayer 1. to God *in excelsis*, the most highest, as the *Psalmist* speaks. *Save us O thou most highest.* No salvation but from those everlasting hills of mercy, salvation to be look'd for from none else, the very meanest of the multitude know that.

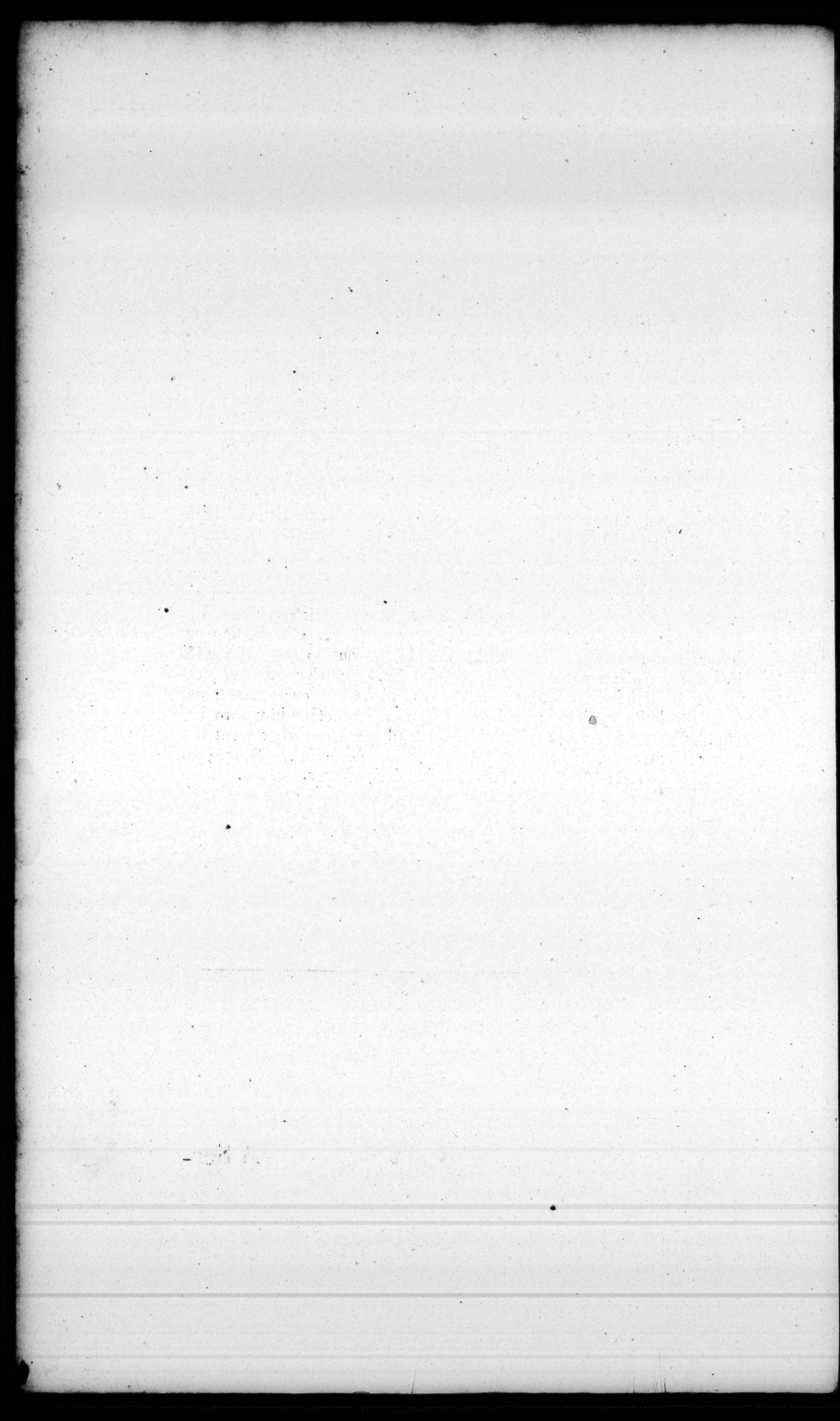
A prayer 2. for salvation *in excelsis*, that he would deliver us with a high hand, work salvation with a mighty arm; such as all the world might see it: that he would magnifie this King that cometh, and exalt his Kingdom that cometh to the clouds, set it above the reach and power of malicious men, make it grow and prosper, maugre all contradiction and opposition of the highest and strongest of the earth.

A prayer 3. for salvation *in excelsis* indeed, for salvation in the highest Heavens; not only to be delivered here, but to be sav'd hereafter; not only for Grace and Righteousness here of the highest pitch, but for glory of the highest order: a prayer that God as he has exalted him that here came in his name, so he would exalt us all that call upon his name, to sit at his right hand in heavenly places, in the highest right.

So

So these multitudes pray, and so pray we; so praise they, and so praise we. Do what we can our selves to praise and bleſs him, and do what we can to get others do it; call upon the *Angels* to joyn with us, do it with all our might and ſtrength, ſtretch out our voices, ſcrue up our ſtrings: nothing content or ſatiſſie us in our prayers or praises, but the higheſt, the higheſt thankfulneſs, the higheſt devotion, the higheſt expreſſion and way of both, that either the multitudes before, or the multitudes that follow, *Jews* or *Chriſtians*, former or latter *Saints* ever uſed before us.

All perhaps cannot ſpread carpets, cloths, and garments to entertain him; nor have all Boughs of Palms, or Olives to meet him with; all have not wherewith to make a ſolemn ſhew and flouriſh; but all have tongues, all may ſing *Hofanna's* to him; or if that word be hard, all may cry *Save us Lord*, and *Bleſſed be he that came and cometh*. If we have neither ſubſtance to praise him with, nor ſolemn Ceremonies allowed us to praise him by, nor ſolemn Services permitted to pray to him, or to praise him: we have yet Words, and *Pſalms*, and Prayers to do it with, and times and places that none can hinder us. And if we ſet about it *in excelsis* with high courage, ſuch as becomes the Servants of the higheſt, and neither fear the face of man nor Devil: we may do it *in excelsis* too, with high Solemnities. Our *Hofanna* to be fav'd, *Save us O King of Heaven when we call upon thee*: our Prayers will ſave us from any thing that can hurt us; he that is in the higheſt will ſuccour and defend us, preſerve and bleſs us, and if we follow him ſtrongly with our cries, follow theſe multitudes cloſe in their Devotion to follow Chriſt, ſing out his praise with courage, pray with fervency, go out to meet him with joy, entertain him with gladneſs, own his coming with confidence, celebrate it with holy Worſhip, do all to the higheſt of our powers: our *Hofanna's* ſhall be quickly turn'd into *Allelujahs*, our bleſſing him into being bleſſed our ſelves by him, and we with all the *Saints* that went before or followed him, ſing *Benedictus's* and *Allelujahs in the higheſt*; to the higheſt God in the higheſt Heavens for ever and ever. *Amen.*



A S E R M O N O N

The Second Sunday in Advent.

S. MARK i. 3.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths streight.



Aint *John Baptist* is here sent in the verse before the Text to prepare his way. Holy Church sends her *Baptists*, and Preachers still, four several days together before the time (for so many *Advent Sundays* or great days of Preparation there are in her Holy *Kalendar*) to do as much. Conceive *me* the voice of one of them to day, of one crying in the *wilderness*, in a Land as wild and barren of good, as any *Wilderness* of *Water*. *Prepare ye the way, &c.*

Indeed he had need of a better voice than *mine*, that cries it *now* to any purpose. Need there is of a loud crier indeed, of *Vox clamantis* at the highest, one to cry it aloud, and *ring* it in mens ears, to get them to it; they have so almost forgotten, many of them, both day and preparation; his *day* and his *way*, so many *new* ones have they of their *own*.

Nay, and where *old* day and way are *both* pretended to be observ'd, there is too much *wilderness* and *Desart*; so many wild, irregular, unmortified passions and affections, such dry, barren doings, so much of our own ways, and ends, and interests even in religious business, the streight way deserted but too much, that we had need of some *rough John Baptist* to thunder it to awaken us.

Nor will *once* crying it serve the turn. One single *prepare* will do no good. *Prepare, make streight*, both little enough; and *three Evangelists* to cry it so after the *Baptist* has done crying: again and again, over and over, scarce sufficient to keep wild passions under, to work us to a sufficient preparation, to *make streight paths*, or *keep* them.

St. *John* the Gospeller for the day, has only the first part of the Text, the other *three* have both, S. *Mat.* iii. 3. S. *Luke* iii. 4. and S. *Mark* here in the Text. The *Prophet Isaiah*, whence the words are taken, has so too; with some addition. Were we what S. *John* would have us, we should need no addition; but being what we are, *line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little*, are too little for it. It is best to take the fullest,

fullest, that our *preparation* may be the fuller, to take it too, out of the mouths of *two* or *three* witnesses; that so every word may be established in our hearts, and in our memories: the *Lords way* prepared, his *paths* made strait, the *work* done against his coming, whensoever, and howsoever, and which way soever he shall vouchsafe to come unto us.

The words are originally the Prophet *Isaiah's*, *Isa.* xl. 3. prophesied by him, but proclaim'd by *S. John Baptist*, *Christ's Herald* to proclaim his coming, and his Harbinger to take up his lodging for him in the hearts of the sons of men. And a *Proclamation* they are to all to prepare and to make ready, make all ready to entertain him: And *two* points there are of it, *two* parts of the preparation required in it.

1. To prepare his way.
2. To make streight his paths.

This way of his divides it self you see into the *great* open road, and into *narrow* paths: and each has its proper way of ordering; prepare to one, and make streight to the other. *Prepare* his way, make *streight* his paths.

But to prepare it for the fuller and easier understanding (for I preach to all) I shall do with the *Text* as we do with our *Rooms* and *Houses* when we prepare and make them ready; in doing that we turn things upside down, remove them this way and that way, hither and thither, till we find where to place them best. I shall use the words so here, *disturb* their order, that I may bring all into the better order, and we all make the better preparation, and set all things streight.

Be pleased then to forgive me the disorder, and consider this *way* and *Paths*: First, what they are: Then secondly, whose they are: Then thirdly, this Preparation, that it must be: What fourthly, or how it must be: And fifthly, by whom it must be.

1. *What* the way that is to be prepared, and what the paths to be made streight, we must understand by the connexion of these words with the former, and by the way *St. John* went before us.
2. *Whose* they are, the *Domini* will tell us, the *Lords* they are.
3. *That* prepared they must be, the *Mood* and *Tense* of the Verbs *Parate* and *facite*, being the *Imperative* command here to do it, will assure us.
4. *How* prepared, the *use* and *sense* of the same words will shew us, when we examine what it is ordinarily to prepare and make streight.
5. By *whom* they must be prepared and streightned; the *number* of the *verb plural*, and *indefinite*, will satisfie us. We are all to do it.

So 1. what this way *is*, and what these paths *mean*. 2. *Whose* they are. 3. *That* prepared they *must* be. 4. *How* prepared they *should* be. And 5. by *whom* prepared they *ought* to be, are the particulars, by which I shall lead you in the *way*, and in the *Preparation*, prepare you the way to prepare the way of the *Lord*, and make *his* paths streight; the only way to have any comfort of his coming. I begin with the way, to shew you what it is, that we erre not from it.

First, *This way* say some, is the *Soul* of man, *Cor spatiosum*, so *Origen*; and these paths the powers and operations of it. *His way is in this Sea, and his paths in these deep waters*. Here the wind *blows*, and the tempest *rises*, and the waves *roar*; the unruly passions make a noise and tumult, and so as the Psalm has it, *His foot-steps are not known*, *Psal.* lxxvii. 19. We cannot discern his track by reason of their tumultuous doings. *These* are they that are to be prepared, and stilled, and quieted, the *Soul* calm'd,
and

and laid, and smooth'd, that *Christ* may come into it. But this is the way into which, and not by which he comes.

The way by which he comes, or we meet him, is, first, the way of *Faith*. Faith is the way by which he comes into the souls of men, the way in which St. Paul worshipped the *God of his Fathers*, Acts xxiv. 14. in and by which we first come unto our Lord, and worship him as *did our fathers*. Prepare your hearts for it, prepare them for him, that when he comes he may find faith upon the earth, in this *earth* of ours, where e're else he miss it. And here as Faith is the way, so the several *Articles* of it may pass for the *paths*. God grant we keep them right, and streight, and our selves streight to them, in this *perverse* and *crooked* generation.

2. The way secondly by which we meet him, is the *Law*, *Mandata Legalia*, says another. Not much distant from St. Paul's stiling it, School-master to Christ, the way to bring us to him. The terrors and threatenings of the Law a good way to prepare us for his coming: the *Types* and *Figures* a good way to lead us to him, that we may see he is the same that *was*, and *is*, and *is to come*; the Saviour of all that were, and are, and shall be sav'd, the same the *Patriarchs* promised, the *Sacrifices* prefigured, the *Prophets* prophesied of, the *Jews* expected, the *Apostles* preach'd of, the *world* believed on, and *all* must be saved by. With such thoughts as these then are we to set upon our preparation: 1. To break our high and haughty spirits by the consideration of the terrors of the *Law*, the curses due to them that break it (and alas! who is it that does not?) so to make way to let him in. Then 2. by the *Types* and *Figures*, to confirm our faith, and make them so many several paths to trace out his *foot-steps*, and know his coming.

3. The *third* way by which we are prepared, or which we are to prepare for him, is *Repentance*. The very way St. John Baptist came to preach. His *Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, being the same with this, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths streight*. Those words of the Prophet the Text, and his the Comment. No way indeed to *Christ* but by this way. No way but by Repentance to begin it. *Turn ye, turn ye, says the Prophet*, we are all out of the way God knows from the beginning. If we will into the way again, into the way of our Lord, turn we must, repent we must of our *former* ways, and doings, get us into *better* ways. And then *paths* here will be the streight and narrow ways, the *rigours* and *austerities* of repentance, the streightning our selves of all our *former* liberties and desires, making our paths so streight and narrow, that no *tumour* of *pride*, no *swellings* of *lust*, no *pack-horses* or heavy carriages of the *world* or *Devil* may pass by that way any more, nothing but *Christ* and his little flock of humble virtues, such as can enter at the streight state, none else henceforward to walk in it. Prepare we repentance and all its *parts* and *paths* for the third way and its paths.

A fourth is *Baptism*, the way St. John Baptist came in too, a way that nam'd him so, the way that was always thought to lead all to *Christ* and his *Kingdom*, that came there in any *ordinary* way. *Arise and be baptized*, Acts xxii. 16. that's the way to the Lord *Jesus*. The way he sent his *Disciples* in to bring in the world unto him, St. Mark xvi. 16. whatever shorter way our *new* men of late have found for their *Disciples*. The *Articles* and conditions of the Covenant of *Baptism* promised and undertaken by the baptized either in their *own* persons, or by *proxy*, are the title *paths* of this *great* way, the several *tracks* that make it up, the ways and paths we are to walk in, if we intend ever to meet the Lord.

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The *fifth* way is *Gods Commandments*, a way that we all must make ready for him, his own way indeed, drawn out by his own hands and fingers; a way of which himself professes, that he came not to *destroy* it (as some vainly delude themselves) but to *fulfil* it, to perfect, to exalt it to a greater height, from the *outward* act, to the *inward* thought; from the *lower* degree of vertue, to the *highest* of it; from bare *precepts* to additional *counsels*, from meer *external* performances to right and regular *intentions* in them. And here as the *moral* Precepts are the great *plain* way, so the *Christian Enhancements* of them to the highest pitch, the regulations of them to right intentions, and Christian counsels are the *paths*, the narrow and straiter paths. The sum and short is this. Holy *Christian* life and conversation in all its parts according to our powers and capacities, is the fifth way to be prepared by them that seek the *Lord*, and expect to see his face.

And yet if there be room and leave for a private conjecture, the way of *Gods* providence in his judgments and mercies towards *Jerusalem*; the way of his mercy in saving the believing, and destroying the unbelieving *Jew*, now near at hand, may come in for a sixth way of the *Lord*: A way indeed past finding out in all its secret paths, yet to be prepared for, and more then pointed at by the Prophet *Isaiah* in that place whence the words are taken, and by *St. John* in this. God there bids comfort his captive people, for their deliverance from *Babylon* was now nigh at hand, and their enemies near destruction; calls to them *therefore* to prepare themselves for it, to make ready and expect it: And here *S. John Baptist* tells the people the Kingdom of *Heaven is now at hand*, *S. Matth. 3. 2.* which (by comparing it with that *wrath to come*, threatned to the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, *v. 7.* with his exhortation to *flee* from it, and by the coming of the *great and dreadful day of the Lord*, mentioned by the Prophet *Malachi* *iv. 5.* in the place where *S. John Baptists* coming is foretold; and the dreadful-ness of it exprest, *Chap. iii. 2.* where he is said to come to prepare his way before him: but *ver. 1, &c.* *S. Johns* inviting to repentance to divert or shun it) can be no other than *Christs* coming in Judgment against *Jerusalem*, to execute vengeance upon his enemies, and deliver his faithful servants: vengeance and deliverance, the two great manifestations of his Power and Kingdom; and sure no more then need to cry out to us to prepare and make right paths against *that* coming, make way for his judgments to pass by us, and his mercies to come to us.

Thus you have the way and paths, observe them: many several *paths*, but *one* only way to Christ and Heaven, observe that too; and though many ways I shewed you, they all come into *one Law* and *Gospel*, Baptism, and Repentance, Faith and Obedience, Mercy and Judgment, Precepts and Counsels, all into one. 'Tis *way* in the *singular*, to shew that peace and unity is the only way of the *Lord*, the only way of *Christ*.

Yet 2. *both* paths and way it is. We must descend to *particulars*, every one to cleanse his *own*, his own *private* paths. Not only shew me thy *ways*, O Lord, says *David*, but teach me thy *paths* too; *Psal. xxv. 3.* Not only to rectifie the outward action, but the inward thoughts; not to content our selves with a *general profession*, but to come to a particular *practice* of Religion of the way of *Christ*. Observe that too.

Particular practice I say, and yet 3. of the general way, of the way generally and *Catholickly* held by all: and 2. of *all things* generally in that way, all the several tracks of vertue, *none* to be omitted, seeing the paths indefinitely, one as well as another, (none as I hear excepted) are here to be made strait: that's a third thing I wish observed.

But

But *lastly* the way first prepared, then the *paths* made streight. Christs way is a way of order. First, a general resolution to make all streight and ready, then a particular entring into every path to do it. Resolve first upon the way of Piety, then take the paths that lead best to it; *parate* first, then *facite*, prepare good resolutions, then set to do them. Nothing done well before them, nothing well done without them. And *viam* first, then *semitas*, the plain way of the Commandments for beginners, the harder and streighter way of Counsels for great proficients and perfect men.

II. The way and path thus now found out, we are next to enquire whose it is, or to whom it leads. *Viam Domini*, the Lords it is; so the Septuagint and Evangelists all render it, in the Genetive: and *Domino* it is too; so the Hebrew in the Dative, to him it is, or for him it is; to him it is it leads, for him it is prepar'd, the preparation all for him.

Viam Domini 1. His way first, and not our own. *Non sunt via mee, via vestra*, Isa. lv. 8. His ways are not ours, ours are Lust, Covetousness, Ambition, Hypocrisie, meer superficial and external Works, Vanity and Error. The ways we spoke of, Mercy and Truth, Faith, Hope, Charity, Obedience, and all good ways are his, not ours; we have no good ones of our own. Nay even our Souls, those ways too into which he comes, are his: his and not our own; the Soul of the Father, and the Soul of the Son; of all Fathers and Sons: all mine, says God, *Ezek. xviii. 4.* Our Bodies too, they are Gods, *1 Cor. vi. 20.* bodies and spirits all his, made and prepared for his own way and Service; all again to be prepared by us, that they may be fit for him to walk and be in.

For 2. *Viam Domino* it is. To him all our ways and paths must be directed, to his Glory and Worship: all lead to him as to the end of all; from him all good ways come, to him all good ways tend: he is *Alpha* and *Omega*, is and must be the beginning and end of them. They are *Domini & Domino*, both of the Lord and to the Lord, all our ways and preparations, or all are wrong. To him as to my Lord the King, visiting us in mercy and gracing us with his presence; and to him as to my Lord Judge to visit us in judgment, and punish all offenders; as a Lord to us, or a Lord against us; as our own King in triumph, or another King in fury, and to him in each consideration there is a proper way, and a proper way of preparing it.

III. And now 3. Be it what way it will, and to the Lord, under what notion or way we will; a preparation there is due, a preparation next enjoyn'd us.

Indeed there is no meeting him unprepar'd, better meet a Lion in the way, or a Bear robb'd of her Whelps than him unprepar'd. *Prepare your hearts unto the Lord*, says the Prophet *Samuel*, *1 Sam. vii. 3.* And make streight paths for your feet, says the *Apostle*, *Heb. xii. 13.* Law and Gospel both for preparation. If thou come to serve the Lord, *prepare thy soul*, says the Son of *Sirach*, *Ecclus. ii. 1.* 2. If thou goest into his house, *prepare thy foot*, keep it, keep an eye over it, that it slip not there, says the Son of *David*, *Eccles. v. 1.* go not in rashly, and in haste. 3. Prepare thy mouth too, that it be not too hasty to utter any thing, says he, *ver. 2.* 4. If thou goest any where to pray, *before thou prayest prepare thy self*; *Ecclus. xviii. 23.* they that fear the Lord will do so, *Ecclus. ii. 17.* will prepare their hearts, yea and ponder their paths too: for so *Solomon* advises us, *Prov. iv. 26.* *Ponder the paths of thy feet*, and let all thy ways be established. Nay ponder them, and all thy ways shall be established, so it may be read; and so *Jotham* found it, became mighty, says that Text,

2 Chron. xxvii. 6. because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God. No way to become great, mighty, and powerful with God or Man, like preparing Gods way in righteousness, keeping our selves streight to the ways of God; a reward sufficient to establish it for a duty. That we may do it as we should, we are now next to enquire what is meant by this preparing and making streight, and how we are to do it?

The word in the Original is either from פָּנִים *panim*, *facies*, and may be construed either by *faciem dare*, *h. e. speciem*, make the way look fair, give it a handsom face; and so to prepare the way will be to cleanse the way: or by *faciem obvertere*, or a *facie amovere*, change the face of it, or remove things off the surface of it: and so to prepare it, will be to clear the way of rubs and blocks, to remove our sins out of the way. Or 2, from זָכָה *angulus* a corner, and may be rendred *Angulate*, corner it out, and lay it to the line and rule. And then to prepare, will be to make it smooth, regular, and equal.

Put them together, and to prepare the way will be to remove all foil and filth, all blocks and impediments, all roughness and unevenness out of our ways, which are like any ways to hinder our Lords coming to us, so to put all by, that he may have way to come to us, and we the easier and fullier receive him when he comes. Thus to prepare his way will be to remove all hindrances, and to make his paths streight will be to bring all furtherances to his coming. To remove our sins by repentance, which else would hinder him from coming, is to prepare the way; to regulate and order our paths to the rule of his Commandments, to the squares of righteousness, is to make *streight paths*: both together compleat the preparation, which we will consider first in general, then in particular: first how his way generally is to be prepared, then how particularly, after a more particular and special way and manner.

We cannot find how in general to prepare his way better then by the words that follow immediately in the Prophet Isa. xl. 4. and are so repeated also by S. Luke iii. 5. Every Valley shall be filled, and every Mountain shall be brought low, and the crooked ways shall be made streight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth.

Every Valley must be filled, the empty valleys of our Souls filled up with the fruits of all good works; these valleys must stand so thick with such holy corn, with all good fruits, that they laugh and sing, make us sing merrily, the praises of the Lord. 2. Every Mountain and Hill must be brought low, all our proud high thoughts laid down. The greater Mountains and lesser Hills, mole-hills as well as Mountains, as well great as less, and as well less as greater sins cast down; our very natural reason and understanding submitted to the obedience of faith. 3. The crooked ways must be made streight, all our crooked ways, distorted actions, perverse affections, all that is awry or swerving from the rule of Gods Commandments must be rectified and set right. 4. All the rough ways made smooth, all our roughnesses and unevennesses natural or customary made smooth and level, no stones of offence, no thorns, or bushes, hedges or ditches in the way.

That the way be neither mountainous with pride, nor dark with ignorance, nor dirty with lust, nor thorny with worldly cares, nor hollow with hypocrisie, nor slippery with riot, nor washy with drunkenness, nor tedious through slothfulness, nor uneven with irresolution and inconstancy. Fill the low valleys we must, with high heavenly affections and contemplations, with high degrees of Piety and Devotion. Bring
down

down the hills by humility and obedience. *Streighten* the crooked by righteousness and uprightness. *Smooth* the rough ways with meekness, gentleness, and charity. *Pull down* the haughty towering thoughts, *raise up* the groveling mind, *rectifie* the perverse intentions, *smooth* the rough and uneven passions of the soul, prepare them all; remove out of them every thing that may offend, and bring them all into the way of the Lord.

Thus in general. But we have a more particular and special way: for we may consider the way of the Lord, either as the way of a King, (for he is both Lord and King) coming against us with his Armies, or as a King coming to us in his Triumph, to honour us and rejoyce with us.

If we consider the way of the Lord as of one coming against us for destruction, prepare we then as the men of Bethulia did against Holofernes, Judeth iv. 4, 5. They sent messengers into all the coasts, they possessed themselves beforehand of the tops of the high mountains, they fortified the villages, laid up victuals for the provision of war, and gave charge to keep the passages, ver. 7. so they prepared, do we so too; possess we the tops of the mountains by setting our affections upon things above; fortifie we the poor villages of our weak natures by strong and holy resolutions, gather we together all kind of provision for our souls out of the Holy Scriptures, by constant reading and meditation, keep all the passages of them with care and vigilance, and send out messengers into all the coasts of heaven and earth, send up our prayers to the God of Heaven for help, our desires to the Saints upon the earth to assist us with their devotions, advice and company.

Prepare we armour too with Uziah, 2 Chron. xxvi. 14. Shields, and spears, and helmets, habergeons, and bows, and slings. Stand we thus ready armed in the way, our head covered with the hope of salvation for a Helmet, our breast armed with righteousness for a Breast-plate, our body defended with the Habergeon of a holy conversation, in our left hand the Shield of Faith, and in our right hand Alms far better then the strongest Spear, says the Son of Sirach, Eccles. xxix. 13. the Sword of the Holy Spirit, the word of truth girt to our loins, the bow and arrows of the holy fear of Gods Judgments hanging on our shoulders, the Cross of Christ for our Sling, and himself for the stone to smite our grand enemy in the fore-head, and put him to a perpetual shame. Thus make ready to entertain him,

But if 2. he come to us in the way of triumph, or grace, and favour, then prepare we the way as is usual at the entertainment of great Princes. Now at such times they sweep or wash the ways and streets, they pave, they gravel them, they rail them in, they hang them with Tapestry, they strew them with Rushes and Flowers, they set guards to fence the ranks, and place themselves in order to cry out Vivat Rex, or some such thing to receive them with joyful acclamations.

Let us go and do likewise. Wash all our ways with tears, sweep them with the besom of confession, pave them with pious vows and purposes, spread them over with fair amendment, rail them in by the obedience of faith and daily caution, adorn them by the imitation of the lives of holy Saints, set them like so many pictures in Tapestry before thee, strew them with sweet Herbs and Flowers; the Roses of Chastity, the Lillies of Purity, the Balm of Charity, the Hyssop of Humility, the Violets of Patience, the Woodbines of Hope and Love, the Bays of Constancy, all the sweets of piety and vertue, guard the way, guard all the ways with attention and godly zeal, and make all the streets and ways resound again with the eccho of praises and thanksgivings. This it is to prepare his way.

And thus every way of *his* we spoke of must be prepared. Our *Souls* so ordered, our *Meditations* of the *Law* so regulated, our *Repentance* so adorned, our *Baptisms* so accompanied, our *Obedience* so fulfilled, *Gods Providence* and way of dealing with us so accepted, with clean hearts, grounded resolutions, an even temper, with care and diligence, with exemplary vertue, sweetness, and moderation, zeal and attention, humility and thanksgiving.

All this while make streight, must not be forgotten. All this must be done now also with *upright* hearts, *sincere* intentions; not in outward form and appearance only, not for fear of punishment, not for hope of reward and praise, not meerly to avoid danger, nor yet lastly to be seen of men. All these the *Pharisees* did, and yet for all that, none of them keeps the *Law*, says *Christ*. The *Law* is not fulfilled by the *external* act, the *Commandments* not kept by the *outward* performance, 'tis the inward spirit of *Charity*, when they are done with that, that only keeps them: 'tis that only that makes right ways, sound paths; without it they are but rotten ways, or hollow ones; such as *Christ* will not choose to come by, or rather will choose not to come by: right good sound ways they must be, if they be his.

And 2. *right* streight ways too, no turning to the right hand or to the left: not do one way in *adversity*, another way in *prosperity*: one Religion when the days are *calm* and *quiet*, another when the days are *stormy* and *troublesom*. *Rectas facite in deserto*, so it is in the Prophet and Hebrew Text, *Isa. xl. 3*. Make his paths streight in the *Desart*, even when we are deserted of all, when we are in the barren and dry Wilderness, where no water is, no earthly comfort about us, in the greatest tribulation, we must keep us still to *uprightness* and *honesty*; that's the way to *Christ*: however for a while he seem to be far from us, thither it will bring us after a while; keep innocency, and do the thing that is right, and that will bring a man peace at the last.

Yet 3. one path or two made streight is not sufficient, *semitas*, 'tis an *indefinite* somewhat a kin to an *universal*, it must be all: he that fails or offends in one is guilty of all, *S. James ii. 10*. If all be not streight, all the paths as well as the ways that you have heard, all the little ways as well as the great, according to our poor power, if at least we do not study and endeavour it, it is not, it is not right.

Nor is it so, or will it be, unless we take in 4. the *Prophets in deserto* too; desert and forsake our selves a little, renounce our *own* ways quite, seek not our *own* but *his*, streighten our selves a little of our *own* lusts and liberties, of our *own* desires and ways, that the only way to make *his* streight, and make *Christ* come streight to us.

V. We have one point yet behind, *who* it is to *whom* all this is spoken, and is given in charge. I confess the *Ministers* and *Preachers* of the Word are the publick messengers and *harbingers* who are sent to prepare the *Lords* way (as *S. John Baptist* was) before him: yet *every one* must sweep his own door. For the words are by *S. John Baptist* preach'd to all *Pharisees* and *Sadduces*, *Publicans* and *Souldiers*, and all the people that came to him; every one to have a share, and so he gives it them. *S. Luke iii. 10, 11*. verses, and so onward, tells people, and *Publicans*, and *Souldiers* what to do, sets every one his path, his part of the way to prepare and streighten. Give me leave to do so too.

The *Ministers* of the *Gospel*, they come first, they have the greatest share with *S. John Baptist*, to go before the face of the *Lord* to prepare his way; but

but how? To give knowledge of salvation, says old Zachary, to his people, for the remission of sins; or somewhat more, even to give remission too, to give absolution; so to give knowledge to the people, or instruct them, and to absolve them, is some part at least of the Ministers share; but to Baptize also with the Baptist, and to consecrate with Christ himself, is to prepare his way too, to make way for him, to raise the Valleys, to comfort the dejected, the cast down and afflicted soul against his sorrows, the penitent against his sins, the fearful against the fear of death, the weak hearted against trouble and persecution, to encourage them to lift up their heads and look to the recompence of reward, to raise up the groveling souls of men from earth and flesh to heaven and heavenly business. 2. To cast down the Mountains of Pride and Singularity, Schism and Heresie, that lift up themselves against the obedience of Christ. 3. To rectifie the perverse and crooked souls of men. And 4. to smooth and soften them, to lay the way of Christ smooth and plain before them, make them know his yoke is easie and his burthen light, by continual preaching to them, and instructing them, so preparing them for the way of Christ. Thus the Minister prepares his way in the peoples hearts; sometimes cleansing the young Infants way by Baptism, and sometimes rectifying the young and old mans ways by advice and exhortation; sometimes clearing them with Absolution, sometimes purifying them with the Holy Sacrament, some way or other always preparing them against the Lords coming. And it lies upon him so to do.

And 2. for the People. There needs no more then has been said. The ways already mentioned concern us all. There is none so righteous but needs some kind of preparation. And he that is not, he needs them all.

And if we consider now the time, so much the more in that his coming is nearer whom we prepare for, 'Tis now but a few days to the day he once came to us in the flesh. Let's think of that, and prepare our selves to give him thanks, to cry Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh, blessed this blessed way of his coming, and blessed the blessed day of his so coming.

'Tis not many more days 2. to the coming of his flesh and blood in the Holy Sacrament unto us. We are expecting and hoping for it, and 'tis fit we should be preparing for it. Better preparation then you have heard I cannot give you for the one or the other. Only I may add in solitude again. Withdraw your selves aside into some desert and solitary place to prepare you in; retire in private to your souls, and to your business. I will bring her into the wilderness, says God, concerning Israel, and speak comfortably unto her, Hos. ii. 14. The place to hear the voice of divine and heavenly comfort is in our Solitude. When we are alone, God only and our selves together. Remember then we go into our Closets, and there prepare our selves, forget no point of the preparation, but sweep, and cleanse, and smooth, and adorn our souls with all holy vertues or resolutions, and come well guarded with attention, care, and vigilance, that nothing unbeseeming pass from us in the way, raise up our spirit with holy thoughts and heavenly desires, cast down our souls with reverence and humility, come without any roughness or unevenness in our affections or behaviour, in our ways or paths; so shall the Lord come; and come with comfort, and take us with him, and bring us safely to the end of our way, the end of our hope, to those things which neither eye hath seen, or ear heard, or ever entred into the heart of man, which he has prepared for them that prepare for him; in the City prepared for us in the Heavens:

A S E R M O N O N

The Third Sunday in Advent.

S. LUKE XXI. verse 27, 28.

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a Cloud, with power and great glory.

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh.



ND because the day of your Redemption draweth nigh, the day in which your Redeemer came in a Cloud of Flesh and Clay, we are this day by the course of Holy Church to wish you to look up, and lift up your heads to see the Son of man your Redeemer in his *second* coming, coming in a Cloud of Glory.

That we knowing it is the same Son of man, who was once born in a *Stable*, and cradled in a *Manger*, that shall one day come to be the *Judge* of Heaven and Earth, we might so celebrate his first coming in flesh, that when all flesh shall stand before him, we might lift up our heads with joy and comfort.

For many there are which shall hang down *theirs*, such who have not thought *aright* of his coming into the world, or not worthily entertain'd it, or not walked with him in it along the stage of his humility, or never rightly pondered the terrors of this second coming in the day of Judgment, which he himself here Preaches to his Disciples, that *they* might take heed to themselves lest at any time their hearts should be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness (the Disease that usually infects all our *Christ-masses*) and cares of this life (the Disease that infects all our days) and so that day come upon them unawares; but that watch they should, and pray always that they might be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man, ver. 34.

They had but three days before accompanied him to *Jerusalem* in his progress of meekness, and now in one of his returns he begins to tell them of another kind of coming to it in judgment and fury. His Disciples, who by the sight of such strong and goodly buildings could not conjecture they

they should end unless the world fell with them, ask him presently upon it, when those things should come to pass, and when should be the end of the world. Their *Master*, that he might at once both *satisfie* and *blind* their curiosity, mingles the signs of the particular destruction of *Jerusalem*, and of the general ruine of the world together: that he might the better keep them awake, to attend both his general and particular coming, and make both them and us, at the approach of particular judgments upon *Cities* or *Nations* always mindful and prepared for the general judgment of the *last day*: which he here calls the coming of the *Son of Man*, and tells us how to entertain it.

So that in the *Text*, as the verses, so the parts are *two*.

1. *Christs coming*. Then shall they see the Son, &c. ver. 27.

2. *The Christians comfort*. When these things, &c. ver. 28.

In Christs coming.

1. *The time when*. Then, after the signs forementioned, then shall they see.

2. *The generality of it*. They, all that can see, shall see his coming.

3. *The evidence of his coming*, so plain, he may be seen, seen by the eye of Faith.

4. *The certainty*. They shall see him, to be sure.

5. *The form in which he comes*, as the Son of man.

6. *The end to which he comes*. He comes with power, with the power of a Judge for quick and dead.

7. *The manner of his coming*. In a Cloud with power and great glory.

In the Christians comfort.

1. *Where it begins*. When these things begin to come to pass, then that begins too. Then look up.

2. *To whom it belongs*. You *Disciples*, do you look up.

3. *What kind of comfort 'tis*. A looking up, a lifting up the head, when all heads else droop with fear and grief.

4. *Whence this comfort arises*, from what ground it springs; for your redemption draweth nigh.

I go on with all in order as they lie; so that if you remember the words, you cannot forget the order and method. Then shall, &c.

x At *Christs coming* there we begin; but *when* is that? the *Heavens* shall tell you, the *Earth* shall tell you, the *Sea* shall tell you, *Men* shall tell you: The *Heavens* by signs and wonders, by storms and tempests, the lights of Heaven shall lose themselves in darkness, and forsake their *Spheres*, and their constantest powers shall be shaken out of their course and harmony. The *Earth* shall quake for fear, and change its place. The *waves* shall fright themselves with their own roarings, and *mens hearts shall fail for fear*; neither knowing how to stand, nor to avoid this dreadful coming. When these with all the host of heaven and earth startled out of their natural seats and postures, shall have prepar'd and usher'd him the way; then shall he come. He comes not till all things else have done their motion and have gone their last.

Nor is it fitting so great a coming should be without an *universal* preparation, where every creature forgetting its own nature begins at last to study *his*. There is nothing that can stand when *God* comes: Heaven it self is at a loss, and remembers not its perpetual motion, when it but apprehends his approach: Every thing is a wonder to it self when *he* appears. If nature it self be thus terrified, which groans not for it self but *us*; what shall we be with all our sins about us, how can *we* abide his coming? Yet

Yet then shall *he* appear, when *we* know not how to appear: Heaven and Earth will change their faces, Men and Angels will hide *theirs*, only *he* it is that dares be seen. Sins or imperfections make all the creatures cover themselves with some disguises, or endeavour it, only *he* who is all purity, all perfection comes then to shew himself.

Yet when this *Then* shall be, when that day and hour shall come, no man knows, no *not the Son of man himself*, S. Mark xiii. 32. *as man*: He that could tell you that come he would, and could tell you the immediate *signs* that would fore-run it, knew not *then* the time when those signs should be, or knew it not to tell you. That we might always be waiting for his coming.

Had it been fit for us to know, no doubt he would have told us; but so far unnecessary it seems to be acquainted with that secret time, that he gives us signs which rather puzzle than instruct us: signs which we sometimes think fulfilled already, signs which have often been the forerunners of particular ruines, and fates of Countries and Kingdoms; signs which at the same time we fear past already, yet think they are not; that so by this hard dialect of tokens in heaven and earth, we might behold our presumptuous curiosity deluded into a perpetual watching for this last coming.

There were in the *Apostles* times, and there are still in *ours*, men who lov'd to scare the people with *Prophecies* and *Dreams* of the end of the world, as if *this then* already were at hand; such as would define the year and day, as if they had lately dropt out of *Gods* Council Chamber: but *we beseech you*, says S. Paul, *that you be not troubled neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand*, 2 Thess. ii. 2. Let no man deceive you, ver. 3. they do but deceive you, they vent their own dreams, and fond presumptions. They know not when the Master of the house will come, *whether at midnight, or at the Cock crowing, or at the dawning*, S. Mark xiii. 35. for as a *snare it shall come on all them that dwell on the face of the earth*, ver. 35. of this Chapter.

It is enough for us to know there shall be a day of Judgment, against which we must provide every day to make up our accounts, lest that day come upon us unawares, lest death at least hurry us away to our particular doom, which will there leave us, where the last judgment will be sure to find us in the same condition; no power or tears of ours being then able to change or alter it.

So that the punctual time of this coming, as *Christ* did not intend to declare, so it matters not to know. A *then*, a time there will be of his coming.

2. A time when *they* shall see him come. *They*, and *who are they*? but all mankind; but all the creatures: *Every eye shall see him, they also that pierced him*, Rev. i. 7. *They* also that crucified him, and condemned him, S. Mat. xxvi. 64. Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, says *Christ* himself, to those who were his torturers and his judges. Nay, *we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ*, Rom. xiv. 10. None of us all must think to escape. There we must give account what we have done amiss, every action, every idle word, every vain and wanton thought, every inward desire must we yield account of in the day of judgment. Thy Crown and Throne, O King, cannot exempt thee. Your Honours and Complements, O ye Nobles, cannot excuse you. Thy Riches, O thou son of *Pelf*, cannot buy out thy absence. Thy sleights, O thou crafty *Politician*, cannot evade it. Thy strength, O *Soul-*

dier, cannot defend thee from the Angel that will drive thee thither. Your Learning, O ye *Learned* of the earth, can find no argument to keep you from it. Nor can ye, O ye *worms* of the earth, ye meanest, find holes in it to hide you at this coming.

Come you must all together at *this* coming, and see you shall the Son of man as he *is* coming. The wicked eyes indeed though *Christ* comes in glory, shall see nothing of his glory. The Son of man they shall behold, his *Humanity*, but not his *Deity*. They shall see the wounds their sins have made, the hands and feet they have nail'd, the side they have pierc'd, the head they have planted with thorns, all these to their grief and sorrow, to see *him* their Judge, whom they have so abus'd and wrong'd, so trampled and scorn'd, that he yet bears the marks of their malice and cruelty even in his *Throne* of Glory.

But the good mans eyes, they shall see his *Glory* too; they shall behold his glorious face, which the eyes of the sinners and the ungodly are not able to perceive, by reason of that veil of sin and darkness that covers them. Both then shall see him, *these* only the Son of man, *those* the Son both of God and man, in his *Cloud*, and in his *Glory*.

Who are they then that think to hide themselves, who live as if they never thought to come to judgment? Did men certainly, but seriously ponder, that will they, nill they, they must one day see *Christ*, they would use him better in his Members than they do, better in his *Church* and *Ministers*, better in his *worship* and *Service*. Do they not, think you, imagine they shall never see him, that they can shelter themselves somewhere from his presence, that dare use him thus contemptuously, thus proudly, thus sacrilegiously and prophanely. Lay but this close every day to your bosoms as you rise, that you must one day come to appear before him, and all your actions will be more regular, and your thoughts higher concerning *Christ*, and all that is his, or pertains to him, and you the better able to answer them when you see him.

3. For thirdly *see* him you shall, not only hear your doom and pass away, but *see* him pronouncing it. When he came to Redeem the world, the eyes saw him. *Simeons* and *Anna's*, and all *Judea's*, many *Greeks* and *Gentiles* too. He came then that all *might* see him. But in his second coming, when he comes to judge it, then he comes that all *shall* see him; every eye behold him. The eyes that slept in dust before his first arrival, the eyes that in the time of his abode could never see him for their distance, the eyes that ever since have seen the world, shall all then see him, as well as they that pierc'd him, nay as well as they who liv'd with him, and daily saw him.

He might, considering how unworthy the best of us carry our selves of that corporal presence, which he once vouchsaf'd us, considering how he was then misus'd and handled, have for ever denied us any sight of his glorious Body; but he forgets the injuries he met with, and will once more shew himself to our bodily sight; not so much to confound his persecutors, as to manifest the justice of his judgment; that the whole world may evidently see, that he who came into the flesh then only to redeem us, comes in the same flesh again to judge us, that all may see our Faith in our *Crucified God* was neither vain nor unprofitable, but by the evidence of their own eyes confess and acknowledge it the only true way to eternal happiness.

And if *these* eyes now must one day behold their *Lord* and *Master*, how should we wash them every day, and cleanse them from earthly defilements

ments with our tears, that they may be worthy to see that blessed object. Wash your eyes ye *wantons* from unclean and lascivious glances. Cleanse your eyes ye *proud* ones from scornful looks. Wipe your eyes ye *covetous* minded from that yellow dust that blinds your sight. Open your eyes ye *ignorant* and seduced souls, that ye run not headlong to your own destruction, hoodwinked to Hell, then only to unclothe your deceived sight, when you can see no comfort. Remember you are all one day to appear before Christs tribunal, where if you expect any comfort to your eyes, you must come thither with them wash'd, and wip'd, and cleans'd, and pure, no spots, no films, no blemish, no blood-shot in them. Whether to your comfort or no, *see* you shall. *That's* certain.

4. *Shall see.* Can we not shut our eyes then when this day shall come? Can nothing lock up our eye-lids in eternal night, no bar set before us but we *must* see this Son of man? Can no Hills hide us, nor no Mountains cover us? Can we not sleep in dust, and rest quiet in our confusion? Can we not vanish into that nothing out of which we first arose, or at least lie hid in that eternal pit from ever seeing any thing but the regions of everlasting darkness? Must we needs rise out of our wretched Caves to see him, who cannot but afflict us at his coming? so it is: we *must* see him. See we must, though but to see the justice of our own damnation.

Nothing can be more certain then *this* sight, sight, it is the *surest* sense, and to *see* him at his coming is to be *certain* of it at the least; but to see the Son of man at his coming, is certainly with evidence; and to be bound to see it, to have such a tie upon us, such a condition on us that we shall see it, whether we will or no, is a certainty with a *necessity* upon it.

That so no man may doubt of a final retribution, whilst he is certain, he shall one day see him, who will *reward every man according to his work*. Let not then the unjustly *oppressed* innocent, let not the *less prosperous* godly spirit droop, or the glorious and yet triumphing sinner: the prosperous *Rebel*, or thriving *Atheist* pride himself in the success of his *Sins*; for he is coming that shall come, and make the just mans eyes run over with joy and happiness for his fore-passed tears, and fill the others eyes with shame and confusion for all their glory. It may be long before he comes, but come he will at last, and his *reward is with him*.

5. But *who* is this that comes? so the *Prophet* once: so we now, or in what *shape* will he appear? *God* is the Judge of all the earth, and who is it that can see *God*? Or if he has committed all judgment to the Son, as it is, *S. John* iii. Yet who can see *him* either, being of one substance with the Father, the same individual and invisible Essence? That therefore he may be seen, he comes in the form of the *Son of man*.

This was that which *Daniel* foresaw in his night visions, *Dan.* vii. 13. one like the *Son of man* coming with the Clouds of Heaven: that which *S. Peter* told *Cornelius*, that *he it was, who was ordain'd to be the judge of quick and dead*, *Acts* x. 42. Not as he was *Lord* of Heaven and Earth, or as he was the *eternal* off-spring of the Deity (for so he could not be ordain'd, he himself being from all eternity) but as the *Son of man*, for he hath given him authority to execute judgment also, *because he is the Son of man*, *St. John* v. 27.

That was it by which he obtain'd the Throne of Judgment, having in that *form* both done and suffered all things for our salvation. *God* thinking but just that he should be our Judge, who came to save us from judgment; that he should judge us, who had been partaker of our infirmities,

and knew our weaknesse: and would by the compassion of nature easier acquit us, or with more evidence of justice condemn us, *himself* having once been subject to the like humane, though not sinful passions.

This is the *form* in which all eyes may see him, all Nations behold him: nor shall the scars of his wounds be covered, but that even by them we may acknowledge our crucified Saviour is become our Judge. Who whilst he judges us in the *form* of man, will condemn us for nothing above the *power* of man. And yet even by his actions, as he was man, will he condemn *ours*. His Humility our Pride, his Abstinence our Gluttony and excess, his Patience our Impatience, his Chastity our Lusts, his paying *Cæsar* beyond his due, our undutiful with-drawings from him; in a word, his Goodness, Piety, and Devotion, our ungodliness, impieties, and prophaneness.

And as it is a mercy thus to be judg'd by one who is sensible of our frail condition, so is it a glory, besides, that our nature is so high exalted as to be the Judge of the world, not of men only, but *Angels* too. What favour may we not expect, when he is our Judge, who is our Saviour, who will not lay aside our nature in his Glory, that he may retain that *sympathy* and compassion to us, which was taken with it, when he took it from us?

6. I shall not here need to spend much time to tell you 6. what he comes for, who have told you so often of a day of Judgment, and the Son of man, to sit on the tribunal. His coming is to Judgment, for he comes with power, and that power of a Judge.

Only I must tell you, 2. that his motion is no faster then an *easy coming*. So loth is he to come to Judgment, so unwilling to enter into dispute with Flesh and Blood, that he delays the hasty prayers of the afflicted Saints under the Altars of Heaven, seems a little to with-hold the full beams of mercy which he has laid up for the Saints, rather then to post to the destruction of the wicked. Yet for the elects sake to hasten he does a little; and therefore he makes a *Cloud* the Chariot of his Power, that when he once begins to come, he may come quickly.

And not so only, but come in *Glory*, which is the last observable in his coming in a Cloud, with Power and great Glory.

In a *Cloud* he ascended, *Acts* 1. and the Angel told the Disciples there, that he should so come as they saw him go. In the Clouds say the other *Evangelists*; they speak of more then one: His cloud is not a single cloud, there are attendant clouds upon it. Angels surround his Throne, *S. Mat.* xxv. 31. the *Trumpet of the Archangel* sounds before him, *2 Thess.* i. 7. his *Throne is a throne of Glory*, *S. Mat.* xix. 28. and his Apostles Thrones are round about him, and all things are in *subjection under his feet*, *1 Cor.* xv. 27.

Thus is he rewarded with Majesty and Glory, for his meekness and humility; that we seeing the recompence of those despised vertues, may learn to embrace them, by so strong incentives and allurements.

What will ye one day say, O ye obstinate *Jews*, when you shall see his Glory, whose poverty you so despised? What will ye do at his *Throne* of Judgment, who would not receive him in his *Cradle* of Mercy? How will his enemies bemoan themselves with them, *Wisd.* v. We *fools* thought his life madness, and his end without honour: How is he now numbred among the children of God, the first born amongst many brethren! Fools indeed to count him what we did, for he shall come again with Majesty and Glory.

Glory is a word, by which *Christ* seems as it were ever and anon to refresh

fresh the fainting spirits of his Disciples, which are ready to betray their Masters to despair upon the apprehension of the fears and terror which their *Lord* had told them should precede and accompany the latter day: This word recalls their spirits, that they begin to look up again, and lift up their heads: For having thus as it were amaz'd their thoughts, and unhing'd their patience, he settles them again with some special comfort, that when these things begin to come to pass, they should look up, and lift up their heads, for (however it fall out to others) *their Redemption draweth nigh*.

Never could words of comfort come better then in the full discourse of the day of Judgment; nor can comfort ever be more welcome, then in the midst of those affrightments. *Christ* never spoke out of season, but here he seems to have even *studied* it. When these things *begin* to come to pass, before they are at their full height, even then look up. Worldly comforts come not so *early*. The heat and fury of the Disease must be abated e're they yield us any refreshment. They are only heavenly comforts that come so timely to prevent our miseries, or to take them at the beginning.

Nor is it yet only when the day begins to dawn wherein the Son of man comes forth to Judgment, that we should first begin to take courage to approach, but whilst the foregoing *signs* of that day are now first coming on. Those terrors that affright *others*, should not startle *us*, even whilst the lightnings run upon the ground, whilst the Earth trembles, the Sea roars, the Winds blow, and Heaven it self knows not how to look, the Righteous is as bold as a Lion, he stands in the midst of security and peace. This is the state we are to labour for; so to put our trust in the most High; that no changes or chances of this mortal life may either remove or shake it, or make us to miscarry. Every calamity should teach us to look up, but these should teach us also to lift up our heads. Whilst common fears and troubles march about us, our Christian patience will teach us cheerfulness; but when these things begin to come to pass, these, which are the ushers to our glory, these should rejoyce and cheer us up, that our reward is now a coming to us.

Us, I say; for this comfort is not general to all that shall see the Son of man coming in glory, but his Disciples only, such as have followed him on earth to meet him in heaven. *Lift up your heads*: to his servants he speaks, such as hear his words, and attend his steps, and do his precepts.

Others indeed must *hold down* theirs; the ungodly shall not be able to look up in judgment. The *covetous* man has look'd so always downward, that he is not now able to look up. The *Drunkard* has so drown'd his eye-fight in his cups, so over-burthened his brain, that he can neither lift up his head nor his eyes at this day. The *voluptuous* man has dim'd his eyes with pleasures, that he cannot look about: and the *ambitious* man has so lost his hopes of being high and glorious, and is become so low and base in the eyes of God, that he is asham'd to lift up his head.

These only that are the true Disciples of their Master, whose eyes are us'd to heaven, who have so often lift up their eyes thither to pray and praise him, they only can look up when these things come to pass.

Nothing can affright the humble eye, nothing can amaze the eye that ever dwells in heaven; nothing can trouble the eye that waits upon her God, as the eye of a *Maiden* upon the hand of her *Mistress*. The humble, devout, and faithful eye may look up cheerfully, whilst all things else
dare

dare not be seen for shame. O blessed *God*, how fully doest thou reward thy servants, that wilt thus have them distinguish'd from others by their looks in troubles, who hast so order'd all things for them, that nothing shall affright them, nothing make them to hold down their heads?

This is a kind of comfort by it self, above ordinary, that grief or amazement should not appear so much as in our *eyes* or *looks*, though so many terrors stand round about us.

I will lift up my eyes unto the Hills, and *I will lift up mine eyes to thee*, O thou that dwellest in the heavens, are the voice of one that looks up for help; and in the midst of these dreadful messengers of Judgment, it will not be amiss for us even so to lift up our eyes, to beg assistance and deliverance. But that is not all our comfort (though it be a great one that we can yet have audience in Heaven amidst these fears) we have besides, the refreshment of inward joy, whereby we rejoyce at our approaching glory. The righteous shall rejoyce when he seeth the vengeance, Psal. lvi. 9. even when the day of vengeance comes, and the righteous shall rejoyce in their beds, Psal. cxlix. 5. whilst they are now rising up and lifting up their heads out of their graves to come to Judgment.

Nor must it seem strange to see the righteous with chearful looks, whilst all other faces gather blackness. It is not the *others* misery that they rejoyce at, but at their *Saviours* Glory, and their *own* happiness. For their *Redemption draweth nigh*, that's the ground of all their joy.

And would you not have men rejoyce, who are redeem'd from misery and corruption, from the slavery of sin, and the power of death? would you not have poor Prisoners rejoyce at the approach of their delivery: you cannot blame 'um if at such news with *Paul* and *Silas* they sing in prison? sing aloud for joy, so loud that the doors dance open for joy, though the Keepers awake and even sink for fear.

Your redemption draweth nigh.] They are words will make the scattered ashes gather themselves together into bones and flesh; words that will make the soul leave Heaven, with joy to lift up the head of her dear beloved body out of the Land where all things are forgotten: Yea the insensible creatures that groan now under the bondage of corruption, will at these words turn their tunes when they see at hand the days of the liberty of the Sons of *God*.

Death and destruction are things terrible, but when the fear of them is once overpois'd by the near approach of a redemption to eternal life and glory, O *Death* then, where is thy sting! O *Grave* then where is thy victory! They shrink in their heads, and pull in their stings, and cannot hurt us while we with joy and gladness lift up our heads.

What are all the signs and forerunners of the day of Judgment, that they should trouble us, when we know the day of Judgment is our *day of redemption*, our *day of glory*? What are the darkness of Sun and Moon, the falling of the Stars, the very totterings of Heaven it self to us, who even thereby expect *new heavens*; where there is neither need of Sun, nor Moon, nor Star to give us light, for the *glory of God* shall lighten it, and the *Lamb*, this Son of man that is coming in his cloud, is the light of it, Rev. xxi. 23. What are the quakings of the Earth, and roarings of the Sea, to them who neither need Land nor Sea in their journey to heaven? What are Wars and rumors of Wars, Famines, and Plagues, and Pestilences, and false Brethren? what are persecutions and delivering up to Rulers, to death and torments? what are those perplexities and fears, that rob men of their hearts and courages, for looking after those

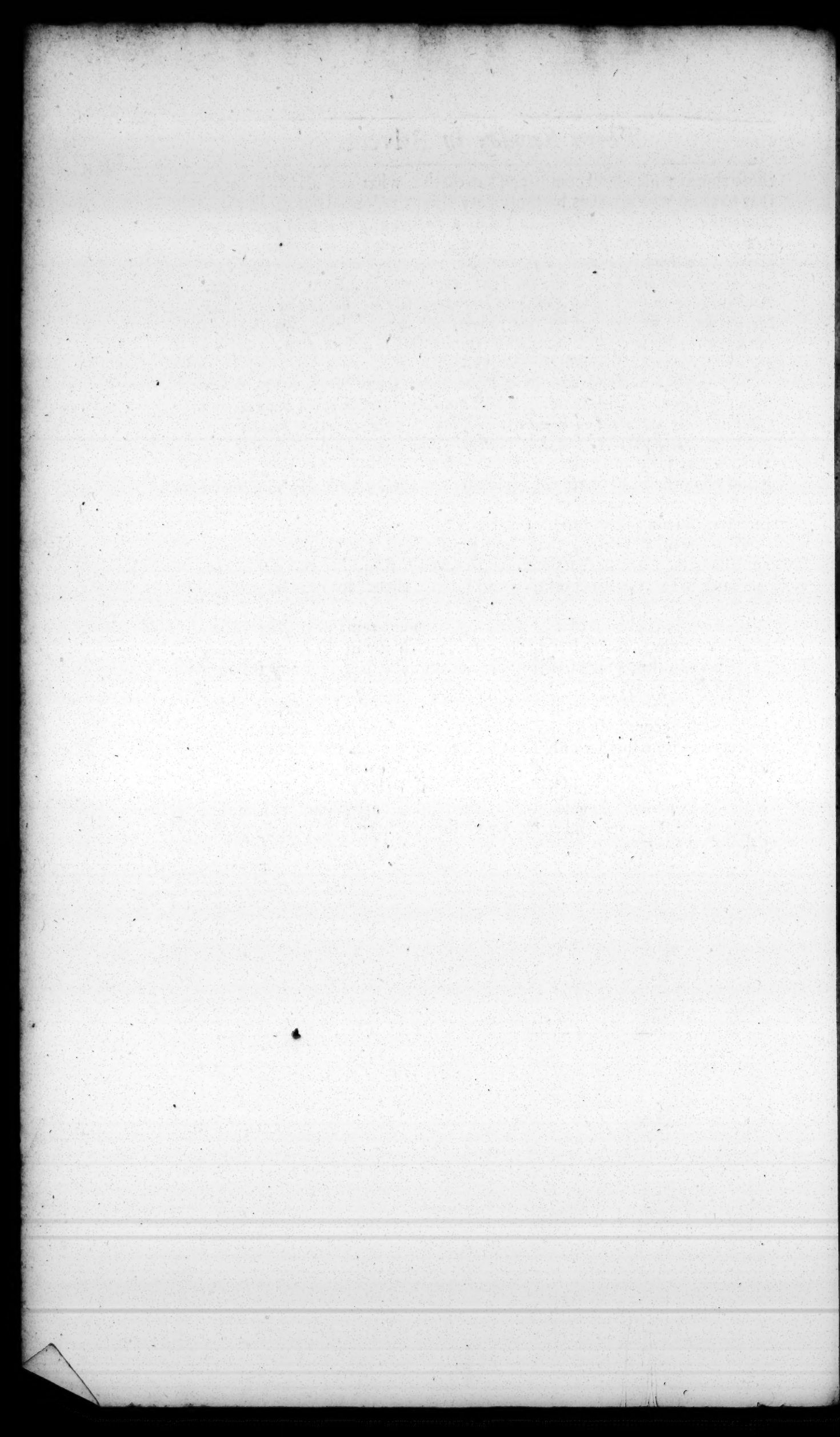
those things which shall come upon the earth? what are all these together to them who are thus by those very things redeem'd out of all their troubles? Saint Paul is bold to set up a challenge; *who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay in all these we are more then conquerours through him (this him in the Text) that loved us, Rom. viii. 35. 37.* And he goes on yet higher, *For I am perswaded, says he, that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, ver. 38, 39.*

And if thus nothing can ever separate us from *Christ's* love, what should trouble us at his coming, whose coming is but to draw us nearer to himself? *Be not troubled, be not terrified, says he, ver. 9. but in patience possess your souls, ver. 18. for there shall not a hair of your heads perish, ver. 17.* Others may fall, and sink, and perish; but do they what they can against you, those that hate you, yet care not for it, look up, look up to *me*, I am coming to redeem you, lift up your heads, and behold the glory into which I am at hand to lift you up.

The *sum* of all now is, that in the midst of all your troubles, all your amazements, all your fears and dangers, you first still lift up your heads; and look to Heaven for comfort, and fetch it thence by prayers and petitions.

2. That in the midst of all calamities, you yet remember your *redemption* is a coming, and so lift up your heads with joy in the heat and fury of them all; knowing that they are nothing else but so many forerunners of your glory.

Lastly, that you look up and lift up your heads with thankfulness, that he has thus accounted you worthy to see him in his glory, and that your redemption is no further off. That having thus begun to look up and lift up your voices in praises and thanksgiving upon earth, he may lift you up into Heaven in soul and body, at his coming there, to sing *Allelujahs* with the Saints and Angels, and the four and twenty Elders, to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for evermore: there to be partakers of all his Glory.



A S E R M O N O N

The Fourth Sunday in Advent.

PHILIPPIANS IV. 5.

Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.



THE Text is a part of the *Epistle* for the day, chosen you may conceive, because the *Lord*, that is the *time* of his coming is at hand. A fit preparation thought by the *Church* for *Christmas* now so near, to prepare us how to entertain the happy day, the joyful news of our *Lord Christs* coming in the flesh. To entertain it, I say, not with *excess* and riot, but *moderation*; not with *rude* tricks and gambols, but *softness* and meekness; not in *vanity* of clothes, but *modesty*; not in *iniquity* but *equity*, somewhat departing from our own right, and seeking occasions to do others right, that all men may see and know we behave our selves like *Servants*, expecting their *Lords* coming, according to all the several senses of the *immoderately* translated *moderation* in the Text, but stretching further then any one *English* word can express it.

A word chosen by the *Apostle* to comprehend the whole duty (if it might be) of a *Christian* preparing for his *Lord* in the midst of much affliction, and long wearied expectation, back'd with an assurance that the *Lord* was now hard by a coming to deliver them. The poor *Philippians* were somewhat sad, or sad-like by the persecutions they suffered from the unbelieving *Jews*, and *Gnostick* Hereticks that were among them; many were daily falling off by reason of them, *ver. 18.* of the former Chapter, and much hurt those *dogs*, as the *Apostle* calls them, *ver. 2.* of that Chapter: the *concision*, that is, those Hereticks had done or were like to do them. But for all that, says he, *Rejoyce*, and again, *Rejoyce* in the *verse* before the *Text*, rejoyce too that all men may see it, see your joy in the *Lord*, and in your sufferings for *him*, yet so that they may see your *moderation* in it too, that as you are not sad like men without *hope*, so you are not merry like men *out* of their *wits*, but as men that know their *Lord* is nigh at hand as well to behold their actions, as to free them from their sufferings, to see their patience and moderation as well as their trouble and persecution.

A perswasion it is, or exhortation to patience and meekness, and some other Christian Vertues (which by examining the word you will see anon) from the forementioned consideration. A perswasion to moderation from a comfortable assurance of a reward, the Lord at hand to give it. A perswasion to prepare our selves, because our Lord is coming: A perswasion so to do it, that all may know what we are *doing*, and what we are *expecting*, that they may see we are neither ashamed of our Religion, nor of our Lord, that we neither fear mens malice, nor our Lords mercy, that we are confident he is at hand, ready to succour and rescue all that patiently and faithfully suffer for him, to take vengeance on his enemies, and deliver his Servants out of all. The time is now approaching, even at the doors.

And if we apply *this* as we do all other *Scriptures* to our selves, to teach us *moderation* and whatever else is contain'd under the word which is so rendred, and draw down the *Lords* being at hand in the *Text* to all Christs comings in Flesh, in Grace, in Glory; it will no way disadvantage the *Text*, but advance it rather, improve the *Apostles* sense and meaning to all *Churches* and *times* to prepare them all to go out to meet the Lord when or howsoever he shall come unto them.

And *moderation* must be it we must meet him with, be the times what they will, come the Lord how or when he please, know we time or know it not; be what will unknown, our moderation must be known, and yet his coming as unknown as it may be, must be consider'd: always in our minds it must be, that the Lord is one way or other continually at hand.

Indeed I must confess the times were troublesom and dangerous when the *Apostle* thus exhorted and comforted the *Philippians*, but the *best* times are dangerous; danger there is as much of forgetting *Christ* in *prosperity*, as of falling from him in *adversity*: and as much need there is of *moderation* when all happinesses flow in upon us, as when all afflictions fall upon us: so the advice cannot be unseasonable: And though we call'd the *Text* St. Pauls advice, or the Christians duty in *sad* times, and his comfort in them, and so divide the words, yet they will reach *any* times, *ours* to be sure, which, call we them what we will, much danger there is in them of falling away from the *true* Faith of *Christ*, and so as much need of the *Apostles* counsel and comfort in them.

Yet take the division of the words in the most proper sense.

- I. St. Pauls counsel, or the *Christians* duty in *sad* times: In the first words, *Let your moderation be known unto all men*; that it be, is the Christians duty; that it should be, is S. Pauls counsel.
- II. The *Christians* comfort in *such* times, or S. Pauls comforting them *with* it, in the following, the *Lord is at hand*. With *this* they are to cheer up their spirits, and S. Paul tells it unto that purpose. Which will afford us a third *Point* to be considered.
- III. The *Connexion* of them, that our moderation is *therefore* to be *known* to all men, because *our* Lord and the Lord of all men is at hand to see what we do, and do to us according to our doings: therefore set down here indefinitely, only *the Lord is at hand*, without determining *how*, or *where*, or *when*, or to *what* purpose, that we might be the more careful in our duty, more universal in our moderation.

And the *Apostle* dealing thus *indefinitely*, and but silently pointing at the sad condition of the times they saw, we shall take leave to be as general, and not bind the counsel or the comfort to sad times, though so they would fit *us* too, as well as the *Philippians*. The advice is good, and the comfort

comfort sweet, both necessary at any time whatsoever. I begin with St. Pauls counsel, or the *Christian* duty for moderation. *Let your moderation, &c.* Three Points I shall consider in it. 1. *Let there be moderation.* 2. *Let it be known.* 3. *Let it be known unto all men.* Let our moderation be, be manifested, be extended unto all.

Let there be moderation, or let our moderation be; let moderation be ours, be our practice, that stands first to be considered. And the word so rendred, has *divers* significations, all indifferently appliable both to the context, and the *Christians* duty against his *Lords* coming.

The word is *ἐπιεικής*, and first and primarily signifies *equity*. So *Aristotle* takes *ἐπιεικής*. A duty as fit for *Christianity* as any; not only to be just, but equal: nay to prefer equity before justice, to depart somewhat from our own right rather than exact the extremity of justice, rather to let go a Coat or a Cloak, then go to law about it, rather to take a blow, an affront, an indignity, nay turn the cheek for a second, then draw a Sword; for a third turn the other cheek rather than venture turning out of Heaven, for turning violently again upon them out of a false opinion of gallantry and valour: rather go a mile or two above our stint and share then to make disturbance for it. This our *Masters* counsel and command too, to all his *Disciples*. S. *Matth.* v. 40, 41, 42. confirmed to us by his example, S. *Matth.* xvii. 27. Tribute paid by him that was not due, only lest he should offend them.

Indeed it is not *equity* but iniquity in them that require more then is right; yet 'tis a point of a *Christian* sometimes (in petty matters always) not to stand rigorously upon our right, when there is like to come nothing but continual dissention, and long-liv'd enmities by exacting it.

So far should we be from doing so, that we should be ready by all fair compliances to remove all unneighbourly contentions from among us; if the parting with trifles, giving way a little, or the forgiving small trespasses will do it. More then so there is in this *ἐπιεικής*, in seeking occasions and opportunities to do good. Our blessed Lord went about doing good, says S. *Peter*, *Acts* x. 38. from City to City, says S. *Matth.* ix. 35. from one place to another, all the Cities of *Judea* over, from one opportunity to another, seeking distressed souls, to do good unto: one point of that *ἐπιεικής*, that gentleness of *Christ*, by which St. *Paul* beseeches the *Corinthians*, 2 *Cor.* x. 1. His was, not to leave sinners as they deserve; ours, not deal with our Brethren always as they perhaps deserve of us, but deal better with them then so; to proffer them some condescensions, seek some such ways and means to reconcile them to us.

This is truly *Christian*, if to be like *Christ* be to be truly *Christian*, and as fit it is for such times as the *Philippians* then were in; nothing more fit in the times either of growing Heresies, or pressing troubles, then to descend a little to win the one, and give a little to avoid the other.

And as well it answers to our English rendring it, *Moderation*. *Equity* is nothing else but a moderating that *summum jus*, a bringing rigorous right to moderate terms, and so striving to be good to them with whom the contestation is, to overcome them into peace and agreement with us, and so avoid the trouble and vexation, that else is like to come from them to us, and likely from us to them again, that we be not found smiting our fellow *Servants*, fighting with one another when our Lord comes. A fit vertue this, to answer that part of the Text too, the *Lords* being at hand.

2. A second interpretation there is that suits as well; for *humanity* and

civility it is taken. And truly Christianity teaches not to be *uncivil*, allows not *uncivil* language, not so much as a *thou fool*, threatens *Hell fire* to such a tongue, *S. Matth. v. 22.* allows not that which is less, a *Racha*, any kind of expression of contempt, or vilifying our Brother. Such a fault must come before the *Council*, we must be brought to the Council-Table for it of God and Christ, and find at what they please for the *mis-demeanour*, though the *Common Law* peradventure will not reach to punish it. 'Tis none of *Christs Religion* that teaches men to be *uncivil*; no, not to return *one* incivility with *another*: no, not *revile again though we be reviled*, says *St. Peter*, and brings *Christ* for an example, *1 Pet. ii. 23.* Others doing us wrong, nay shrewdly persecuting us too, will not authorize us to do it, to requite our very *persecutors* with any *incivility*. A good *memorandum* for those who make it an especial sign of their being better *Christians* than others, to be rude and *uncivil* to their *bettors*, to be saucy and unmannerly to any, to all that run not riot with them into the same madness and folly, *Sacrilege* and *Herefie*, that cannot be content to do men wrong, and rob them of their dues, but must do it with *ill language* and *incivility*. They forget sure the *Lord* is at hand, that there is any *such* thing as a *Lord*, any superiour above them, either at hand, or afar off, either in *this world* or in the *other*. The *Apostles imitatio* is for moderation in this point too, civil and handsom terms, gestures, and carriage, that we should carry our selves *like men*, at least, if we will not like *Christians*. And for such times as the Text refers to, 'tis but seasonable: 1. That the *sufferers* do not increase their sufferings with their own incivilities, or corrupt or *disbonour* them, by so doing: and 2. That those that *cause* them to suffer, do not *enhance* the others sufferings, remembering that *themselves* also are but men, and the spoke of the wheel, (*as that Captive King observed*) which is *now* above, may *by and by* be below again, especially if it be true (as true it is) that the *Lord* is at hand, his Chariot is coming after, and the Mother of *Sisera*, the *greatest Captain*, need not ask, why tarry the Wheels of it so long, why is it so long a coming? It will come and will not tarry; 'tis happy if it come not on us whilst we are *ranting* and *railing* against any whosoever.

3. There is a third signification of the word for Modesty, so the Latin renders it *Modestia*. As fit a posture for *sad* times, for *any* times, be the *Lord* at hand, or be he *not*, as *any* whatsoever. Not the peculiar virtue of *women* only, though of *them*, *1 Tim. ii. 9.* but of *men* too, an especial way to win our adversaries, to win *Infidels* to Christianity, when they shall behold our conversation in all sweetness and composure, our bodies comely and decently apparelled, our gate sober, our gesture grave, our eyes modest, our countenance compos'd, our speech discreet, our behaviour all in order: when they shall see us merry without *lightness*, jesting without *scurrility*, sober without *sullenness*, grave without *doggedness*, compos'd without *affectedness*, serious without *dulness*, all our demeanour wholly bent to all Christian *well-pleasingness*, at all times, with all companies, upon all occasions, in all places, and businesses. This is nothing but *moderation* neither; we may keep the English still, moderation in our *garb* and *habit*, and *discourse*, and *motion*; *modesty*, that is *moderation* in them all.

4. Yet there is a *fourth* acception of the word, for that sweet, and meek, and gentle temper of the *mind*, whereby we carry our selves patiently and unmov'd in *persecution*, not rendring evil for evil to them that persecute us, not vexing and tearing our selves upon it, not studying revenge, or returning mischief, but on the contrary good for evil, blessing for

for cursing, prayers for imprecations, committing our cause, and our selves to God, that judgeth righteously; this is the true Christian moderation, that to which we are called, says St. Peter; that of which Christ gave us an example, suffered as well for that to give us an example of it, as any thing else, 1 S. Pet. ii. 21, 22, 23. That to which belongs the blessing, S. Mat. v. 5. from this Lord that is at hand: 'Tis the very vocation of a Christian, the very design of the Christians Lord, a blessedness there is in the very doing it, when and whilst we so suffer, we are blessed, S. Mat. v. 10. even before that great reward in heaven, bidden therefore, ver. 12. to rejoyce and be exceeding glad upon it, bidden by S. James to count it all joy, S. James i. 2. bidden by S. Paul in the verse before the Text, to rejoyce and rejoyce again upon it. Nay so exceeding joy it seems the Christian feels in it, that he is fain upon the back of it in this very verse to call to us to be moderate in the expressing it, to call to us for moderation in it, lest we should even burst with it, or overflow into some extraordinary effusions of it, and so provoke more affliction by it. Rejoyce the Apostle would have us in our sufferings for Christ, but yet with moderation, be meek, and patient, and contented, and resigned in them, yet not as we were senseless, careless; or desperate, but discreet and moderate in them all: neither so sensible of them, nor anxious in them, as to forget others, and our respects due to any of them; nor so senseless and careless to forget our selves, and the care due unto our selves. This the moderation most proper to the persons and time, persons under persecution, and in the time of being so, the most seasonable advice: and as seasonable to be given when the Lord is at hand: moderation to be observed in the expectation of his coming. They were not too hastily to expect it. The Thessalonians were almost shaken in mind, and troubled by so hasty a conceit, that the day of Christ was at hand, 2 Thess. ii. 2. That Christ was just then a coming; S. Paul was fain to stop their haste, to moderate their expectation, to tell them though the day was near, it was not so near as they supposed it, they must be content to expect a little longer, some things were to be done first. So necessary seems moderation in this point too, lest expecting the Lord too soon, and failing of him, they should be shaken, and fall away from him, as if he had deceived them, quit their Faith and Religion for want of patience and moderation. Thus you have the four senses of *moderation*, four kinds of moderation. Equity or Clemency, Humanity or Civility, Modesty or Sobriety, and Meekness or Gentleness. It follows next that they be shewed, that we shew them all, that we make them known. Let your moderation be known.

For sufficient it is not always to do well; we must be known to do it, though not do it to be known; yet be known to do it. Indeed when we fast, or pray, or give alms, or do any good work, we must not do it, that we may appear to men to do so, St. Mat. vi. 3, 4, 6, 18. yet it must appear to men, for all that, sometimes that we do so. Ye, that is, ye Christians are the light of the world, and a light is not to be put under a bushel, S. Mat. v. 15. but on a Candlestick, to give light unto all that are in the house. Let your light therefore shine before men, ver. 16. Shine so before them, that they may see your good works, see and glorifie, glorifie God that has given such graces unto men: glorifie him again by taking thence an example of such things to themselves. There have been, are still, doubtless, many that brag much of Faith and Holiness, and Purity; nay of Meekness and moderation too; but if we call them to S. James his shew us them, as he requires them, by their works, we may say as Christ said of the Lepers that were cleansed, S. Luke xvii. 18. There are scarce found

one of ten that shew that return of Glory unto God; if one, they count him but a *Samaritan*, no true *Israelite* for it: though *S. James* says expressly, Faith is dead, where there is no such *expression*: and for those other vertues, the very *action* is so evidently *outward*, that they must needs be known *where* they are, they cannot be hid, are not the vertues they pretend to, if not known. It were strange to hear of equity, or civility, or modesty, or moderation that could not be *seen*; ridiculous to call him merciful or equitable that *shews* it not by some condescension, to stile him civil whose *behaviour* is nothing less, him modest who shews nothing but immodesty, him meek who expresses nothing but *fury* and *impatience*. These are vertues we must needs see where e're they be.

It is reported of *S. Lucian* the *Martyr*, that he converted many by his modest, cheerful, and pious look and carriage, and of *S. Bernard*, that *In carne ejus apparebat gratia quædam spiritualis*, &c. There appeared a kind of spiritual grace throughout his body, there shone a heavenly *brightness* in his face, there darted an *Angelical* purity and *Dove-like* simplicity from his eyes, so great was the inward beauty of his inward man, that it poured out it self in his whole outward man abundantly over all his parts and powers. No motion in them but with Reason and Religion. Where such vertue is, it will be *known*; must be too: must so be exprest that men may know and feel the benefits and effects; *rudito*, Let your *moderation* speak for you, whose servants you are, *what* Lord you are under, what is your expectation and your faith.

3. Nor is it *thirdly* enough to have it known to *one* or *two*, to a few, or to the *household of faith alone*. To all men, says the *Apostle*, *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Friend* and *Foe*, *Brethren* and *Strangers*, the *Orthodox* and *Hereticks*, good and bad, *Christian* and *Infidel*. Condescend to men of low estate, the very lowest says our *Apostle*, *Rom. xii. 16*. Provide things honest in the sight of *all men*, *ver. 17*. live peaceably *with all men*, *ver. 8*. do all possible to live so: having your conversation honest among the *Gentiles*, that by your good works which they shall behold, they may glorifie God in the day of visitation, *1 Pet. ii. 12*. full of *equity*, that they may not speak evil of you as *rigorous* and *unmerciful*; full of *courtesie* and *civility*, that the Doctrine of *Christ* be not blasphem'd for a Doctrine of *rudeness* and *incivility*; full of *modesty*, that the adversary speak not reproachfully of the word of truth, have no occasion to do so by your *immodesty*; full of *moderation*, that all good men may glorifie God for your professed subjection to the Gospel of *Christ*, to those *hard* points in *hard* times, to meekness and moderation, when your adversaries are so violent and immoderately set against you. Known must our moderation be in all its parts, that all may know the *purity* of our profession, the *soundness* of our Religion, the *Grace* of God appearing in us, the *adversary* be convinced, the *Christian Brethren* incited by our examples to the same grace and vertue.

One note *especially* we are to carry hence, that it is no excuse for our impatience, harshness or any immodest or immoderate fierceness against any, that they are men of a *contrary* opinion, we use so ill: Men they are, and even under that *notion* moderation to be used towards them; much more if we acknowledge the same Lord or his being any way near either to reward or punish. And so I pass to the second *General*, the *Christians comfort* that holds up his head in the bitterest storms, and makes him moderate, quite through them all. *The Lord is at hand*.

Now the Lord is several ways said to be at hand, many ways to be near us.

He

He is at hand, or near us by his divine essence, not far, says S. Paul from every one of us, Acts xvii. 27. he is every where, we therefore no where, but that he is near us.

He is near us 2. by his *Humanity*. The taking that upon him has brought him nigh indeed to be bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

He is nearer us yet 3. by his *Grace*. One with us, and we with him; one Spirit too, he in us and we in him, S. John xiv. 20.

He is at hand, and nigh us 4. in our Prayers. So holy David, *The Lord is nigh unto them that call upon him, all such as call upon him faithfully.*

He is nigh us 5. in his word, in our Mouths, and in our Hearts, by the word of Faith that is preached to us, Rom. x. 8. we need not up to heaven, nor down to the deep, says the Apostle, to find out Christ, that eternal word is nigh enough us in his word.

He is nigh us 6. in the Sacraments, so near in Baptism as to touch and wash us, especially so near in the Blessed Sacrament of his Body and Blood, as to be almost touched by us: there he is truly, really, miraculously present with us, and united to us. 'Tis want of eyes if we discern not his Body there, 1 Cor. xi. 29. in that, or see not his power in the other.

He is at hand 7. with his Judgments, Behold the Judge standeth at the door; S. James v. 9. Just before he had said the coming of the Lord draweth nigh: but at the second look he even sees him at the door. Now of this coming two sorts we find expected even in the Apostles times, his coming in judgment against Jerusalem to destroy his Crucifiers, the unbelieving Jews, and the Apostate Christians the Gnostick Hereticks, that together with the Jews persecuted the Church of Christ; and his last coming at the general Judgment. We may add a third, his being always ready at hand to deliver his faithful servants out of their troubles, and to revenge them in due time of all those that causlessly rise up against them. The first kind of his coming to Judgment, that against Jerusalem, is the coming by which the Apostle comforts his Philippians, that the Lord was now coming to deliver the persecuted Saints out of their hands. The third is that by which our drooping spirits are supported in all distresses, that he is near to help us in them all. The second his coming at last in the general Judgment, then howsoever, to make a full amends for all, is the great stay of all our hope, all Christians from first to last. No great matter how we are here from time to time driven to our shifts, the time is coming will pay for all.

Nor do any of the other comings want their comfort: 'Tis a comfort that God is so near us in his essence, so that in him we live, and move, and have our being: our life and being are surely the better by it. 2. 'Tis a great comfort that our Lord would vouchsafe us so great an honour as to become like one of us to walk and speak, and eat, and drink, and be weary, and weep, and live, and die like one of us. 3. 'Tis an inward and inexpressible comfort that he will dwell in us by his Grace and Holy Spirit; make us Holy as himself is Holy. 4. 'Tis a gracious comfort that he suffers us so ordinarily to discourse with him in our Prayers. 5. 'Tis an especial comfort, and that such a one as he affords not to other Nations, to give us by his word, the knowledge of his Laws, to reveal unto us his whole will and pleasure. 6. 'Tis a comfort to a miracle that he will yet draw nearer to us, and draw us nearer to himself by the mysterious communication of himself, his very Blood and Body to us. No greater
establisb.

establisment to our souls, no higher *solace* to our spirits, no firmer *hopes* of the Resurrection of our bodies, then by his thus not only being *at hand*, but *in* our hands, and in our *mouths*. I speak *mysteries* in the *spirit*, but the comfort never a whit the less: the joy of the *spirit* far the greater ever. But all these comforts heapt together, what comfort in the world like the faithful Christians, all so great, so certain, so nigh at hand?

And yet if I take hint from the *Churches* choice of this Text for the front of her *Epistle* this day to her Children, and say, the Lord may be said to be at hand too, because the *Feast* of his coming, that coming which gave *rise* to all the rest, the original of all the rest of his gracious comings is *at hand* to us. I shall not strain much, and to those that truly love his appearance, that can really endure to hear of his coming, any day that shall put 'um in mind of his being at hand must needs be a comfort, a day of good tidings: and this as well as any of the rest will afford us an argument to perswade to *moderation*, to make it known to all men whatsoever at the time when the Grace of God appeared to all men whatsoever. Which passes me over to the *third* general, the *connexion* of the Christians *Duty* and his *comfort*, or the perswasion to the duty from the comfort of the *Lords* coming. And so many perswasive arguments there are from it, as there are comings, so many reasons to perswade moderation as there are ways of our Lords being at hand: nay one more, and it shall go *first* because it stand so.

The *Lord* it is we do it to, to the *Lord*, and not unto *men*: let that go for the *first* reason. 'Tis to him, and for his sake we are enjoyn'd it. St. *Paul* thought it a good argument to perswade *Servants* to their duties, *Eph. vi. 7.* to do their service with a good will too; and we all are *Servants*, and here is our *Lord*.

Here 2. and *at hand*, on every hand. We cannot go out of his presence. Let *that* teach us righteousness and equity, modesty and moderation, to do all things as *in his* presence. Would we but think this when we go about any thing, did we but consider seriously the *Lord* was so *near* us, heard us, and look'd upon us; our words would be wiser, and our actions better. We durst not look an immodest look, nor speak an uncivil word, nor do any iniquity, or any thing out of order. The *Lord* is at *hand*, and sees what we are doing; let all then be done with *moderation*.

3. The *Lord* has taken on our nature, and come *nearer*; yet given us by it an example so to do; to be so moderate as to wash even *Judas's* feet, to do good, to be civil and modest, and moderate, even towards them that are ready to *betray* us, who will do so the next hour, have bargain'd for't already: he came so nigh us in our nature, that we might so come nigh him in his Graces; took up our *nature*, that we might take up his *example*; drew so nigh us, that we might not draw off our affection from our brethren, but serve them in love, how ill soever they serve us: he took hands and feet to be at hand, to teach our hands and feet how to behave and moderate themselves towards others.

4. He is at hand with his *Grace* to help us: there is no excuse of *impossibility*. By *him* I can do all things, says the *Apostle*, by *Christ* that *strengthens* me, *Phil. iv. 13.* Be it never so hard, his grace is sufficient for us, sufficient to enable us to all grace and vertue, even the hardest, and in the most difficult exigencies and occasions. This he offers to us, offers it abundant-

bundantly, more abundant grace. Let us accept it then and walk worthy of it in all modesty and moderation.

5. He is at hand to our *Prayers*: let us then desire the grace we just now spake of. Deny us he will not; do but knock and he comes presently. To him that *knocks*, says he, it shall be opened. Let us but come with meek and patient spirits, in love and charity with all men, forgiving them that we may be forgiven, and speed we shall; be merciful and moderate towards them, so will God be merciful and moderate towards us: moderate at least the *punishments* due to our *iniquities*. The Lord is at hand always to hear such a mans prayers; learn we therefore *moderation*.

6. The Lord is near us in his *word*. This is his command and will, must therefore be performed. If the will of the Lord be so, that we must suffer for righteousness sake, let every answer to our *persecutors* be with *meekness and fear*, says S. Peter, 1 Pet. iii. 15. for happy are you, says he, and therefore be not *afraid* of their *terror*, neither be troubled, ver. 14. moderate your passions and your fears, and esteem your selves happy by so suffering, by so doing. 'Tis your Masters revealed will that so it should be, 'tis his way to draw you nearer to himself, by working you to the image of his sufferings.

7. The Lord is at hand, the Judge is coming: At hand to reward us for all our sufferings, all our patience and moderation, all our modest and civil conversation, all our righteousness and mercy. Not one Sparrow, not the least feather of a good work shall fall to the ground, not one half farthing be lost, not a hair of any righteous action perish: he is at hand to take all up that nothing be lost. At hand he is 2. to deliver us out of the hands of all that hate us: if *temporal* deliverance be best, to give us that; if not, to deliver us however over into *glory*. At hand 3. to take *revenge* upon his enemies, to repay his adversaries. He came presently after this *Epistle* to do so to *Jerusalem*, to destroy the incredulous *Jews* and *Apostate Hereticks*, those persecutors of the Christian Faith, came with a *heavy* hand, that they fell to their utter ruine and desolation. Thus he being at hand to reward and punish, may well serve as an argument to perswade us to be patient for so short a while, to be moderate both in our *fears and desires*, in our *words*, and in our *actions*, to bear a while and say nothing, to endure a while and do nothing; for one there is a coming, nay, now at hand to deliver us, to plead our cause, to revenge our quarrel: let us commit it to him. He is the Judge of all the world, and judges right: Let us do nothing but with moderation, and not think much to shew it unto all, when we are sure to be rewarded for it: and those that observe it not, are sure to be punished.

8. The Lord is at hand in the blessed *Sacrament*, and that is also now at hand; but a week between us and it. And *moderation* of all kinds is but a due *preparation* to it, some special act of it to be done against it: Righteousness and equity is the habitation of his seat, says David: the Lord sits not, nor abides where they are not. The holy *Sacrament* that is his Seat, a Seat of wonder, is not set but in the righteous and good soul, has no efficacy but there. *Modesty* and *humility* are the steps to it; into the modest and humble soul only will he vouchsafe to come. All *reverence* and *civility* is but requisite in our addressees unto it. But *moderation*, *meekness*, and *patience*, and *sweetness*, and *forgiving* injuries is so requisite that there is no coming there, no offering at the altar till we be first reconciled

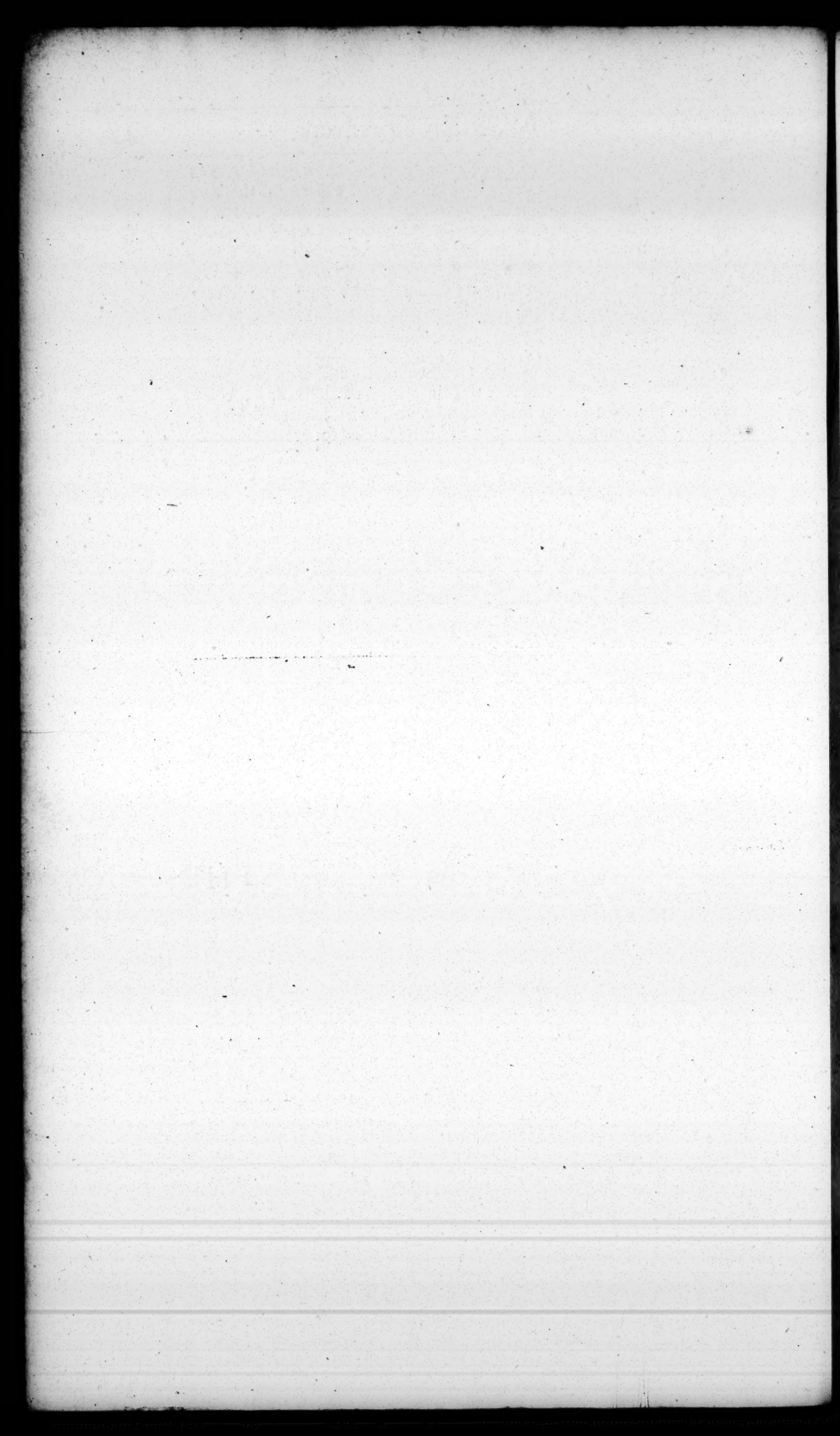
led to our Brother. *Go be first reconciled to thy Brother*, says our Lord himself, *S. Mat. v. 24.* so that now if we desire a blessing of the blessed *Sacrament* unto us; if we desire the *Lord* should *there* come to us, let our moderation be known to all men before we come. Let us study the art of reconcilement, let us not stand upon *points* of honour or *punctilio's* with our Brother, upon quirks and niceties; let us part with somewhat of our right; let us do it civilly, use all men with courtesie and civility, expresse all modesty and sweetness in our conversation; all softness and moderation, patience and meekness, gentleness and loving kindness towards all, even the *bitterest* of our enemies; considering the *Lord* is at hand: the *Lord* of Righteousness expects our righteousness and equity; the *Lord* in his body, and looks for the reverent and handsom behaviour of *our* bodies; the *Lord* of pure eyes and cannot endure any unseemliness or intemperance either in our inward or outward man: the *Lord* that *died* and suffered for us, and upon that score requires we should be content to suffer also any thing for *him*, not to be angry, or troubled, or repine, or murmur at it, or at them that cause it. At the Holy *Sacrament* he is so near at hand, that he is at the Table with us, reaches to every one a portion of himself, yet will give it to none but such as come in an *universal* Charity with all the forementioned *moderations*.

Give me leave to conclude the *Text* as I began it, and fix the *last* Argument upon the *time*. The time is now approaching wherein the *Lord* came down from Heaven, that he might be the more at hand. Fit it is we should strive to be the more at hand to him, the *readier* at his command and service: the time wherein he *moderated* himself and glory as it were to teach *us* *moderation*, appeared so to all, that our moderation also might *appear* to all of what size, or rank, or sect whatsoever.

I remember a story of *Constantia* Queen of *Arragon*, who having taken *Charles* Prince of *Salerno*, and resolving to sacrifice him to death to revenge the death of her Nephew *Conradinus*, basely and unworthily put to death by his Father *Charles* of *Anjou*, sent the message to him on a *Friday* morning to *prepare* himself for death. The young *Prince* (it seems not guilty of his Fathers cruelty) returns her this answer; That, besides other courtesies received from her *Majesty* in *Prison*, she did him a *singular* favour to appoint the day of his death on a *Friday*, and that it was good reason he should die *culpable* on *that* day whereon *Christ* died *innocent*. The answer related, so much mov'd *Constantia*, that she sends him this reply: Tell *Prince Charles* if he take contentment to suffer death on a *Friday*, because *Christ* died on it; I will likewise find my satisfaction to *pardon him* also on the *same* day that *Jesus* sign'd my pardon, and the pardon of his *Executioners* with his Blood. God forbid I shed the blood of a man, on the day my *Master* shed *his* for me. I will not rest upon the bitterness of *revenge*, I *freely* pardon him.

Behold a Speech of a *Queen* worthy to command the *world*, worthy a *Christian* indeed. To *apply* it, is only to tell you, we may often take excellent occasions of vertue and goodness from *times* and *days*, and bid you go and do likewise. The *time* that is at hand is a time to be celebrated with all *Christian* joy and moderation, some particular and special act of *Charity*, *Equity*, *Modesty*, *Meekness*,
Mode-

Moderation to be sought out to be done in it, or to welcome it : The Feast of *Love* to be solemnized with an *universal* Charity ; the *Lord* at hand to be honoured with the *good works* of all our hands. His coming to pardon and save sinners to be accompanied with a *general* reconciliation and forgiveness of all enemies and injuries, of a moderation to be exhibited unto all. Let your *moderation* then keep *time* as well as *measure*, be *now* especially shewn, and known, and felt, and magnified by all with whom we have to do, that thus attending all his comings, he may come with *comfort*, and carry us away with *honour* ; come in *grace* and hear us, come in *mercy* and pardon us, come in his *word* and teach us, come in *spirit* and dwell with us, come in his *Sacrament* and feed and nourish us, come in *power* and deliver us, come in *mercy* and reward us, come in *glory* and save us, and take us with him to be nearer to him, more at hand, to sit at his *right* hand for evermore.



THE FIRST SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

ISAIAH xi. 10.

And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign of the People, to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious.



ND in that day there shall be. And in this day there was a root of Jesse that put forth its branch. That day was but the *Prophecie*, this day is the *Gospel* of it. Now first (to speak it in the *Psalmists* phrase) truth flourished out of the earth: now first the truth of it appeared.

Some indeed have applied it to *Hezekiah*, and perhaps not amiss in a lower sense; but the *Apostle* who is the best *Commentator* ever upon the *Prophets*, applies it unto *Christ*, *Rom. xv. 10*. There we find the *Text*, and him it suits to more exactly every tittle of it, and of the Chapter hitherto, than to *Hezekiah* or any else.

He was properly the *branch* that was then to grow out of old *Jesse's* root. For *Hezekiah* was born and grown up already some years before, thirteen at least. He 2. it is whom the Spirit of the Lord does rest upon, *ver. 2*. upon *Hezekiah* and all of us; it is the Dove going and returning. Upon him 3. only it is, that the Spirit in all its fulness, with all its gifts, wisdom and understanding, and counsel, and might, and the rest is poured out upon. He 4. it is alone, that judges the earth in righteousness, which is said of this root, *ver. 4*. He 5. it is that shall smite the earth, with the rod or spirit of his mouth, as it is, *ver. 4*. so attested, *2 Thess. ii. 8*. He 6. it is that can make the *wolf* and *Lamb*, the *Leopard* and the *Kid*, the *Calf*, the young *Lion* and the *fatling* lie down and dwell together, as is prophesied of him, *ver. 6*. He the only *Prince* and *God* of Peace, that can reconcile all enmities and difference, that can unite all disagreeing spirits. In a word, He is the very only He whom God hath set up for an *Ensign* to the People, to whom all the *Gentiles* flock in, to whom rest and glory

glory both properly belong; the only *root* too from whence all good things spring, or ever sprung either to *Jesse*, or *David*, or any *other*. Nor is it the *Apostle*, or we Christians only that thus expound it of *Christ*, the learnedst of the Jewish *Rabbies* do so too; *Tam Christiani, quam tota Circumcisio fatetur*, says *S. Jerome*, all the *Circumcised* Expositors confers as much, all understand it of the *Messiah*, only a *temporal Messiah* they would have, and erre in that, because *ours* the *true* one, they will not acknowledge. But we have enough from what they do, from their own confessing it to be spoken of the *Messiah*, or the *Christ*.

Of *whom* we have here four particulars to consider, the *stock* from whence he was to come. The *design* upon which he was to come. The *success* of his design, and the *glory* of his success.

1. The *stock* from whence he was to come, is, the *Root* of *Jesse*.
2. The *design* upon which he was to come, is, to *stand* for an *Ensign* to the people to come in unto him.
3. The *success* of his design, is their *coming in*, and *seeking to him*, to it shall the *Gentiles* seek.
4. The *glory* of his success, and his *rest* shall be *glorious*. *Rest* he shall have *in it*, and *glorious* he shall be *by it*.

And to bring both ends of the *Text* together, nay all the ends of it together, I shall lastly add the *time*, when this *Rest* shall spring, when this *Ensign* shall stand up, when the *Gentiles* shall seek, when this *Rest* and *Glorry*, or *glorious rest* shall be. In *that* day, says the *Text*. In *this* day says the *Time*. In the Birth of *Christ*. In the *Times* of *Christ* all this should be, and all this was. Both days are one, and this of his *Birth-day*, the very *first* of all these things here, beginning to be fulfilled.

And the *sum* of all is no more but this, that notwithstanding the most calamitous times (such as were threatned to the *Jews*, by bringing upon them the *Assyrian* in the former Chapter) there should a day of deliverance at last appear, a day of rest and glory, when the *Messiah* or *Christ* should come to perfect all their deliverances, and not only *theirs* but the *Gentiles* also, and build up a *Church* out of them both unto himself, and dwell and rest gloriously among them, and bring them also to his eternal rest and glory. I begin at the *root* of this great design, to shew you *who* it is, and *whence* he comes, that shall thus stand up for the rest and glory of the *People*. And the *Root* of *Jesse* here he is call'd: There shall be a *root* of *Jesse*.

In the *first* verse his *stile* somewhat differs: He is called a *Rod* out of the stem of *Jesse*, and a branch out of his *Roots*; and he is them all; and this *root* in the *Text*, but a *Metonymy* to express them all.

1. He is a *Rod*, the *Rod*, the staff that so comforted old *David*, *Psal.* xxiii. that even raises his dead bones out of the *Grave*, and makes him as it were walk still among the *living*.

The *staff* that supported dying *Jacob*, which he lean'd upon, and worshipped, *Heb.* xi. 21. which we may worship too without any *Idolatry*. A *Rod*, a *Staff* he is to lean upon, a staff that will not fail us, not like the *reeds* of *Egypt*, the supports and succours that the *world* affords us: they will but run into our hands and hurt us, to be sure never be able to hold us up. This *Christ* is the only staff for *that*. A staff that will comfort us when we are ready to die, that we may trust to upon our death-beds, that we may commit our dying spirits to, as *S. Stephen* did, *Acts* vii. 59. No other can do that but this of *Christ*. Indeed no rod hath either comfort or strength to hold by but only *He*.

Yet

Yet a rod 2. he is, to rule and correct us too, as there is need; a rod of iron by which God bruises the rebellious spirits, Psal. ii. 9. The rod or Scepter of Judah, the Shepherds rod or hook; one to shew his Kingly power, the other his Priestly power over us. So the word denotes two of his prime offices out to us, and may yet intimate a third; the Shepherds rod being not so much to strike, as to direct and lead the stragling Sheep into the way: a part of his Prophetick Office. So a word well chosen to signify unto us all his three Offices. And the Rod or Wand that is carried before the Judge, when he goes to the Judgment-seat, may not unfitly be added to the other, and put us in mind that this our King, and Priest, and Prophet, shall also come to be our Judge; and we therefore so to carry it, so to yield our obedience to him, so to submit to his Rod, as we intend to answer it, when he comes to be our Judge, as we expect or hope to have his favour in the day of Judgment.

But he is a Rod 3. new springing out of the root, a kind of pliable tender thing, so stil'd for his meekness and humility, ready to be wound and turn'd any way for our service, to become any thing, to become all things for our good. A rod so pliant, so flexible, so pliable, so tender; never any son of man so pliant to his Fathers will, so flexible to all good, so pliable to do or suffer, so tender over us, never so meek, and humble, and lowly, never any.

Nor did 4. ever rod grow out of a more unlikely stem, מִן: the word used here imports a dead trunk cut close down to the earth, no appearance of life or power in it. The Royal Family of David was come to that, nothing appeared above ground that could give hope of the least bud or leaf. And then it was, that notwithstanding this Rod came forth: So low may things be brought to humane eyes, and yet rise again: Gods time is often then. When our eyes are ready to fail with expectation, and all hopes have given up the Ghost; when the Family of David, from whence all the promis'd and look'd for hope was in a condition near an extinguishment; when Herod had usurp'd the Throne, and the Romans settled him, and his succession in it; when not so much as a sprig, or bud, or string of hope could be seen by the quickest sight, then out starts this rod upon a sudden, and prospers to a wonder. Well might the Prophet put wonderful for one of his names; there was never any like him: and it may teach us first to adore this wonder, to kiss this Rod, support or comfort us, rule or correct us how it will; and 2. thankfully admire Gods goodness that thus does so unexpectedly often for us.

And upon this next title we may do as much: For he is not only a bare single rod, but a branch that spreads it self abroad into twigs and little boughs. Two main ones at the first, his Divinity and his Humanity; from which infinite little twigs and leaves, infinite graces and blessings are extended to us. My servant the branch, God calls him, Zach. iii. 8. And the man whose name is the Branch, Zach. vi. 12. The word in both places descends from צֶמַח which signifies any thing that springs or rises either from above or from below. His Divinity that springs from above, from Heaven; and to that alludes the Latin in both those places, which translate צֶמַח by Oriens, the East or rising Sun, and is alluded to by Zachary in his Benedictus, when he calls him the day-spring from on high, Oriens ex alto, S. Luke i. 78. His Humanity that riseth from beneath, from earth, and is sufficiently signified by the root of Jesse: You have them both together, Jer. xxiii. I will raise unto David a righteous branch, ver. 5. and this is his Name, the Lord our righteousness, ver. 6. And from these two all the leaves and fruits of righteousness whatsoever.

For

For it is not 2. a meer sprout, or yet a barren one, but flourishing and flowering too. Beautiful and glorious, Isa. iv. 3. excellent and comely in the same place. Flos the vulgar reads it, a fair goodly flower. The Rose of Sharon, and the Lilly of the Valleys, Cant. ii. 1. a sweet smelling Flower, that sent forth its odour into all the world. *Flos odorem suum succisus reservat, & contritus accumulatur, nec avulsus amittit; ita & Dominus Jesus in illo patibulo crucis, nec avulsus evanuit, nec contritus emarcuit, sed illâ lancea punctione succisus speciosior fusi cruoris colore vernavit, mori ipse nescius & mortuis aeterna vitae munus exhalans*, says St. Ambrose. A Flower when it is cut off loses not its scent, and being bruised it increaseth it: So our Lord Jesus, says he, lost none of his beauty, or sweetness, by being broken and bruised upon the Cross; when he was here taken off from the stock of the living, the Blood that issued out of his Wounds, made his beauty more fresh and orient; and his bruising there extracted from him so sweet an odour, that even still every day raiseth the fainting soul out of its swoon, and revives even the dead, that they flourish out of their Graves by a Resurrection to life eternal. The original of the word נצר is from נצר servavit, to reserve or keep; and may therefore not unfitly denote the great sweetness and vertue that is reserved and laid up in Christ to sweeten and adorn the stinking and nasty houses of our sinful souls and bodies.

And from the same Hebrew root, so signifying servavit, we have Servator, our Saviour and Conservator, pointed to us. This נצר this Branch, this Flower bears in its name the Saviour, and hath been by some drawn into Nazareus, to raise a conjecture that Christ was called a Nazaren from Isaiah's Netzer, from the word here translated Branch, or Flower. But this to be sure can be no mistake, to tell you either from the word, or any way else, that our Saviour is design'd by it; and this Rod, and Branch, and Root is none but He.

And Root indeed he is, as well as a Rod or Branch; a Root without a Metonymy, as well as by it. The very Root of all our happiness. The Root in which our very life is hid. *Our life is hid with Christ in God*, says the Apostle, Col. iii. 3. The Root 2. and foundation upon which we all are built; we are all but so many twigs of this great Vine-root, so many Branches from him, S. John xv. 5. The Root 3. whence all good springs up to us, all Flowers of Art, of Nature, all the staves of comfort, and rods of hope, all the branches of grace, and glory; no name properer to him in all these respects. Nay 4. Even the very Root of Jesse too, from whom Jesse had his original, from whom Jesse's family throve into a Kingdom, from whence his youngest sons Sheephook sprang into a Scepter: the Root of David himself too, so says he of himself, Rev. xxii. 16. Why then say we, or why says the Prophet, the Root of Jesse? why? not without reason neither. Jesse was but a poor man in Israel. My Family what is it? says David himself, 1 Sam. xviii. 18. yet from Jesse would God raise up Christ, that we might know God can bring any thing out of any thing. He can raise Empires out of Sheephcotes; so he did Cyrus, so he did Romulus: the one the Founder of the Persian Monarchy, the other of the Roman. He raised the first Governour of the Jews, out of a bulrush-basket, and the first States of the Christian Church out of a Fisher-boat: And not many mighty, not many noble, saith S. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 16. But God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, and base things of the world, and things that are despised hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, ver. 17. 18. So little is God taken with our greatness, our great birth or breeding.

And

And it is 2. to shame our pride, who undervalue mean things; ready enough to say with the unbelieving *Jews*, can any *Good thing* come out of *Nazareth*? can any great eminent person spring out of the Root of *Jesse*? Yes it can.

And our great Ancestors will but shame us, as well as be ashamed of us, if we have nothing to glory of but our relation to their *ashes*: Our high descent is not worth the speaking of, and perhaps if we but trace it a little higher than our own memories (to be sure if to the first beginning) the best and gloriouslest *Princes* will find themselves deriv'd from as mean an original as any poor *Jesse* whatsoever. And this may serve well to cut our plumes, to stop our rantings of our descent and birth, or any thing, and teach humility.

To drive that lesson home, I may note to you 3. that 'tis the root of *Jesse* here, not *David*, (though elsewhere he is called the Root of *David*, as *Rev. v. 5.*) lest he should seem either to receive glory from *David*, or need his name, to cover the obscurity of his beginning. There is no glory to that of humility, nor any so truly honourable as the humble spirit.

And of *Jesse* 4. not *David*, to point out as it were the very time of our *Messiah's* coming; even then when there was scarce any thing to be seen or heard of the house of *David*; the Royal Line as it were extinct, and *David's* house brought back again to its first beginning, to that private and low condition it was in in the days of *Jesse*. Thus again would God teach us to be humble in the midst of all our ruff, and glory, by thus shewing us what the greatest Families of the greatest *Princes* may quickly come to, where they may take up ere they are aware. And 2. to give us the nearest sign both of *Christ's* coming, and of himself; that when things were at the lowest, then it would be, and that his coming would be in a low condition too; in poverty and humility: Root and *Jesse* both intimate as much.

And lastly, if we may with some *Etymologists* derive it from *בשׂה* and interpret it a gift, there will be as good a reason as any, why it is here said rather of *Jesse* than of *David*; even because this root of all this good is to us, comes meerly of free gift, So God loved the world, says *S. John* iii. 16. that he gave his only begotten Son; and not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, says *St. Paul*: this great kindness of God our Saviour appeared towards us, this Lord our Saviour appeared to us, *Tit. iii. 4, 5.* as a root, as a rod, as a branch; a root to settle us, a rod to comfort us, a branch to shelter us; a root to give us life, a rod to rule us in it, a branch to crown us for it; a close stubb'd root, a weak slender rod, a tender branch full of loveliness, meekness and humility.

And he appeared as they all do out of the earth, watered by the dew of Heaven; they have no other Father than the heavenly showers: so by the descending of the Holy Ghost upon the Blessed Virgin, as rain into a dry ground, this holy Root put forth, this Branch sprung up without other father of his humanity; which is the meaning both of *erit* in the Text, and *egredietur* in the beginning, both of this shall be, here, and that shall come forth, or there shall grow up, in the first verse of the Chapter. And thus we have the first part of the Text, the descent, and stock, and nature, and condition, and birth of *Christ*, with other things pertaining to it. And now for his design, to be set up, or stand for an Ensign to the people.

II. And indeed, for that he was born to gather the stragling world into one body, to unite the *Jew* and *Gentile* under one head, to bring the straying sheep into one fold, to draw all the Armies of the earth together

into one *heavenly host*, that we might all march lovingly under the banner of the *Almighty*, under the command of Heaven.

Men had long marched under the command of *Flesh*, *Earth*, and *Hell*. God had suffered all Nations, saith *St. Paul*, to do so, to *walk after their own ways*, *Acts* xiv. 16. But now he commands otherwise, *commands to repent*, and leave those unhappy *Standards* to come in to his, *Acts* xvii. 30.

And he exempts none, debars none, all men every where are called to it, *Acts* xvii. 30. *every nation*, and *every one* in every Nation, that will come *shall be accepted*, *Acts* x. 35. *every creature*, says he *himself*, *St. Mark* xvi. 15. *Jew and Greek*, *bond and free*, *male and female*, all one here, *Gal.* iii. 28. Be we never so heavy laden with sins and infirmities, under this *banner we shall find rest*, *St. Mat.* xi. 28. Be we never so hotly pursued by our fiercest enemies, *here we shall have shelter*, and protection. For he is not only an *Ensign* set up to invite us in, but an *Ensign* to protect us too by the *Armies* it leads out for us.

And as it *first* is set up to call us, and *secondly* to bring us into a place of defence and safety, so does it *thirdly* stand to us, and not leave us. An *Ensign* may be set up and quickly taken down, but this stands and *stands for ever*. It is not idly said, when 'tis here said particularly, *it is to stand*. *Humane* forces, devices, and designs may be set up, and not stand at all; but *God's* and *Christ's*, theirs will: the gates of *Hell* it self cannot disappoint them, cannot throw down this *Banner*, *St. Mat.* xvi. 18. *His counsels shall stand*, *he will do all his pleasure*, *Isa.* xlv. 10. They do but fight against *God* that go about to resist it, says *Gamaliel* the great *Doctor* of the *Law*, *Acts* v. 39.

And will you know the *Staff*, the *Colours*, and the *Flag* or *Streamer* of this *Ensign*? why, the *Staff* is his *Cross*, the *Colours* are *Blood* and *water*, and the *Streamer* the *Gospel*, or preaching of them to the world. The *Staff* that carried the *Colours*, was of old time fashioned like a *Cross*, a cross bar near the top, there was, from which the *Flag* or *Streamer* hung; so as it were *prefiguring*, that all the *Hosts* and *Armies* of the Nations were one day to be gathered under the *Banner* of the *Cross*, to which *Souldiers* should daily flow out of all the Nations and Kingdoms of the earth. By *Blood* and *water*, the two *Sacraments*, is the way to him; and the *Word* or *Gospel* preached is the *Flag* wav'd out to invite all people in.

Come we then in *first*, and let not this *Flag* of *Reconciliation*, of peace and treaty; for to such ends are *Flags* sometimes hung out, be set up in vain; let it not stand like an *Ensign forsaken*, *upon a hill*: come we in to treat with him at least about our everlasting peace, lest it become a *Flag* of *defiance* by and by.

Come we in 2. and submit to the conditions of peace, submit to his orders and commands. The *Septuagint* reads *ἰ ἀρχὴν καὶ ἰδιῶν*, here, to intimate this: He that stands for an *Ensign* is to be the great *Ruler* and *Commander* of the Nations; 'tis requisite therefore that we come in and obey him.

Come we 3. to this *Standard*, and remember we are also to *fight* under it: That's the *prime* reason of *Ensigns* and *Banners*. We promise to do it when we are *Baptiz'd*, and it must be our business to perform it. It is not for us to be afraid of pains or labour, of danger or trouble, of our lives and fortunes for *Christ's* service, a *Souldier* scorns it, even he who fights but for a *little pay*, and that commonly *ill paid*. And shall we turn cowards when we fight for a *Kingdom*, and that in *Heaven*, which we may be sure of, if we fight well?

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III. Shall, it is, I confess in the *future tense* here, reach'd no further in the *Prophets* time, but now it does; the *Prophecie* is fulfill'd, it so came to pass. And it quickly came so, after the *Ensign* was set up, the *Cross* reared, and the *Resurrection* had display'd it. For *I, if I be lifted up from the earth*, says he himself, *will draw all men to me*, St. *John* xii. 32. *Parthians*, and *Medes*, and *Elamites*, the dwellers in *Mesopotamia*, and *Cappadocia*, *Pontus* and *Asia*, *Phrygia* and *Pamphylia*, *Egypt* and *Lybia*, *Rome* and *Cyrene*, as well as the dwellers in *Judea*, *Cretes* and *Arabians*, as well as *Israelites*, *Proselytes*, as well as *Jews*, he will draw all in to him. The vast multitudes that came daily in from all quarters of the world, so many Churches of the *Gentiles*, so suddenly rais'd and planted, are a sufficient evidence to this great truth. And the term, the *Jews* at this day give the *Christians* of כּוּכָנִי the very word in the *Text* for *Gentiles*, confirms as much by their own confession. So true was both *Isaiah's* *Prophecie* here, and *Father Jacob's* so long before, that to him should the gathering of the people be, *Gen.* xlix. 10. But that which is an evidence as great as any, if not above all, is, *St. Paul* applies the *Text* as fulfilled then, *Rom.* xv. 12. And there is this only to be added for our particular, that we still go on and continue seeking him.

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And indeed in the holy Mysteries of the *Blessed Sacrament*, is his second place of *Rest*. There it is that he feeds his flock, and rests at noon, *Cant.* i. 7. And he is glorious there, glorious in his Mercies, illustrious in his Benefits, wonderful in his being there. No such wonder in the world, as his being under these consecrated Elements, his feeding our souls with them, his discovering himself from under them, by the comforts he affords us by them.

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His *Cratch* today was a *third* place of his *Rest*, glorious it was, because 1. the *God* of *Glory* rested there: because 2. the glorious *Angels* displaid their *Wings*, and gave forth their light, and sung about it, *St. Luke* ii. 13, 14. because 3. *Kings* themselves came from far to visite it, and laid all their glories down there at his feet. There his *rest* was *glorious* too.

Nay 4. his *Sepulchre* the place of his *rest* in *Death*, was as *glorious*, is as *glorious* still as any of the other: And I must tell you, the *Latin* reads it *Sepulchrum ejus Gloriosum*; From thence it is he rose in glory: by that it was he gain'd the glorious victory over *Death* and *Hell*: from thence he came forth a glorious *Conqueror*. *Thither* have devout *Christians* flock'd in incredible numbers. *There* have *Miracles* been often wrought, *there* have *Kings* hung up their *Crowns*, *there* have millions paid their homage. And thence have we all receiv'd both *Grace* and *Glory*; from his *Sepulchre*, where he lay down in *Death*, and rose again to *Life*.

There is one *Rest* still behind, and it is not only *glorious*, but *it self* is *glory*: His *rest*, himself calls it, *Heb.* iii. 11. yet a rest into which *he would have us enter too*, *Heb.* iv. 9, 11. And in *Heaven* it is; no rest to *this*, no rest indeed any where, but there, and perfect glory no where else.

And now to wind up all together. This rest and glory, or glorious rest, which ends the *Text*, (*and 'tis the best end we can either make or wish*) springs from the root at the beginning. The *Church* it self, and all the rest and glory the *Churches* ever had, or have, or shall enjoy, grows all from that. Our Holy *Temples*, our Holy *Sacraments*, our Holy *Days*, *this* day the *first* of all the rest, all the benefits of his *Death*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension* into *Glory*; nay our greatest glory in *Heaven* it self, comes from this *little Branch* of *Jesse*, this humble *Root*: and the way to all is by *him* and his *humility*.

And the time suits well, and the *day* hits fair for all. In *that day* says the *Text*, all this you have heard shall be; and *that day* now is *this*. To day the *Root* sprang forth, the *Branch* appeared. To day the *Ensign* was displaid to all the people. From *this day* the *Gentiles* began their search. *This day* he began to call in his *Church*, and the *Shepherds* were the first. To day he first was laid to mortal rest. To day the glory of his *Star* appeared, to wait upon his *Cradle*. To day we also may enter into his rest, one or other of them.

One of his places of rest we told you was in the *Church*, or holy place: let us seek him *there*. Another *Rest* of his we mentioned to be in the *Blessed Sacrament*: let us seek him there. His *Ensign* is there set up; let us go in to him, and offer our lives and fortunes at his feet, proffer to fight his *Battels* and obey his *Commands*: *strive we as the Apostle* adviseth us, *Heb.* iv. 11. *to enter into his rest*. Root we and build our selves upon him. Root we our selves upon him by *humility*, build we upon him by *faith*: grow we up with him *rooted and grounded in love*, and sprouting out in all good works: rest we our selves upon him, and make him our only stay and glory. So when this *Root* shall appear the second time, and blow up his *Trumpet*, as he here set up his *Ensign*, and our dead roots spring afresh out of their dust, we also may appear with him, with *Palms* and *Branches* in our hands to celebrate the praises of this *Root* and *Branch* of *Jesse*, and enter joyfully into his rest, into the rest of everlasting glory.

THE SECOND SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

St. LUKE xi. 7.

And she brought forth her First-born Son, and wrapped him in Swadling-clothes, and laid him in a Manger; because there was no room for them in the Inn.



Shall not need to tell you who this *she*, or who this *Him*. The *day* rises with it in its wings. *This day* wrote it with the first Ray of the morning Sun upon the posts of the world. The *Angels* sung it in their Choirs, the morning *stars* together in their courses. The *Virgin* Mother, the Eternal *son*. The most *blessed* among women, the *fairest* of the Sons of men. The *woman* clothed with the *Sun*: The *Sun* compassed with a *woman*. *She* the Gate of Heaven: *He* the King of Glory that came forth. *She* the Mother of the everlasting *God*: *He* *God* without a Mother: *God* blessed for evermore. Great persons as ever met upon a day.

Yet as great as the *persons*, and as great as the *day*, the great lesson of them both is to be *little*, to think and make little of our selves, seeing the infinite greatness is this *day* become so little, *Eternity* a Child, the Rays of Glory wrapt in rags, Heaven crowded into the corner of a *Stable*, and *he* that is every where want a room.

I may at *other* times have spoke great and glorious things both of the *Persons* and the *Day*; but I am determin'd to day to know nothing but *Jesus Christ* in *Rags*, but *Jesus Christ* in a *Manger*. And I hope I shall have your company along: your thoughts will be my thoughts, and my thoughts yours, and both *Christ's*; all upon *his* humility and our *own*. *This* is our first-born, which we are this day to bring forth (for it is a day of bringing forth) *this* we are to wrap up in our memories, *this* to lay up in our *hearts*; *this* the Blessed *Mother*, this the Blessed *Babe*, this the condition, and place, and time we find them in, the taxing time, the Beasts Manger, the Swadling-clouts, all this day preach to us:

The

The day indeed is a *high* day, the Persons high *Estates*; but the case we find them in, and the esteem too, the day is lately in, is low enough to teach us humility, and lowliness at the lowest.

With *this* the day is great, and the *Persons* great, and the *Text* great too, and time (perhaps) you think it is that it bring forth. Come then let's see what *God* hath sent us in it.

A *Mother* and a *child*, *Swadling Clouts* to wrap it, and a *Manger* for a *Cradle* to lay it in, and all other room or place denied it quite. These are the plain and evident parcels of the *Text*, in number five.

But the whole business is between *two* persons, the *Mother* and the *Child*; and it hath *two* considerations besides the *letter*, a *moral* lesson and a *Mystery*: The *one* sufficiently brought forth, and laid before us; a *plain* lesson of humility from all points and persons. The *other* wrapped up and invol'd in the *Swadling-clothes*, and *Manger*, and want of *Inn-room*; nay in the tender *Mother*, her care and travel. For each may have its *mystery*, and the *Text* no injury, nay hath its *mystery*, and the *Text* injury if it be not so considered. That's the way, that not one *isra*, one tittle of the *Law* or *Gospel* may fall to the ground, or scrap or fragment may be lost.

We shall do so then. Read you first that great Lecture of Humility which *Christ* this day taught us by his Birth, and all the circumstances of it here so punctually exprest: and then shew you a *mystery* in every circumstance. For so great a business as this fell not out by chance, nor the circumstances at *hap-hazard*; but a reason of all there is to be given: why *Christ* was born, why of *such* a Mother, at *such* a time, under *such* a name, in *such* a place, why so wrapt and laid, and no fit room allow'd him. And when we have done so, we will see whether he shall now meet better usage with *us*, than in the *Inn* he did to day, and learn you by his happy Mother, *how* to wrap, and *where* to lay him.

I begin to run over the words *first* as so many points of his humility. And *seven* degrees it rises by, *seven* particulars in them, we take it from. 1. His being brought forth or born. 2. His Mother, *She*. 3. His wrapping up. 4. His clothes he was wrapt in. 5. His laying in the *Manger*. 6. The respect he meets with in the *Inn*, no room there for him. And lastly, the time when this was done. In the days of the taxing, then was this blessed Mothers time accomplished, in the words just before: and then she brought forth her First-born Son. Thus the *Et*, the *And*, couples all, and gives us the time of the Story, that we may know *where* and *how* to find it, in the *Roman* Records by the year of the Taxes.

The *first* step of his Humiliation was to be born, and brought forth by a Woman, the only begotten Son of the *Immortal God*, to become the First-born of a mortal Woman. The First-born of every Creature to become the First-born of so silly a Creature. Lord, what is man, that thou shouldst become the Son of a woman? But if thou wouldst needs become a Man, why by the way of a Woman? why didst thou not fit thy self of a Body some other way? Thou couldst have framed thy self a humane Body, of some purer matter, than the purest of corrupted natures: but such is thy humility, that thou didst not abhor the *Virgins womb*, wouldst be brought forth as other men, that we might not think of our selves above other men, how great or good soever thou makest us.

But 2. if he would be born of a Woman, could he not have chosen an other gates than *she*, than a poor *Carpenters Wife*? some great *Queen* or *Lady* had been fitter far to have made as it were the *Queen* of Heaven, and *Mother* to the *Heir* of all the World. But *Respexit humilitatem ancilla*, it was the

the *lowliness* of this his holy Hand-maid, that he lookt to, it was for her *humility* he chose to be born of *her* before any other. That *we* may know 1. whom it is that the eternal Wisdom will vouchsafe to dwell with, even the *humble* and *lowly*. That 2. we may see, he even *studied* to descend as low as possible, that so even the meanest might come to him without fear. That 3. we should henceforth despise no man for his parentage, nor bear our selves high upon our birth and stock.

Our descent and Kindred are no such business to make us proud; *Christ* comes as soon to the low *Cottage*, as to the loftiest *Palace*, to the *Handmaid* as to the *Mistress*, to the Poor as to the Rich, nay prefers them here, honours a poor *humble* Maid above all the gallant *Ladies* of the world. For *God* thus to be made *Man*, man of a Woman, the eternal *Being* begin to be, Infinity to be encompass'd in a *Virgins* Womb; he whose goings out are from everlasting, now to seem *first* to be brought forth, but now lately born; *Riches* it self, the Son of *Poverty*; so far to debase himself! who indeed can sufficiently express *this his generation*; also the poorness, meanness, contemptibleness, humbleness of it? His delight surely is to be with the *lowly*, that thus picks and culls out *low* things.

You will say so 3. most, if you consider his *wrapping* up, as well as his coming forth: He that measures the Heavens with his *Span*, the waters in the *hollow* of his hand, *who* involves all things, all the *treasures* of Wisdom and Knowledge, in whom *all* our beings and well-beings, the decrees and fates of the world are *wrapt* from all eternity; he now come to be wrapt and made up like a *new-born* child; who can unwind, or unfold his humility? will our *Master* be thus dealt with as a *Child*? thus handled like the *common* infant? and shall *we* hereafter think much the *best* of us to be used like other men? away with all our nicenesses henceforward, and be content that our *selves* and *ours* should be in all things subject to the common fate of the sons of men.

Nor think we much 2. to be wrapt up, and bound sometimes, and denied the liberty of a *stragling* power to hurt our selves, but ever thank the *hand* that binds us up, and takes care of us when we either cannot or know not how to help our selves, would undo our selves, if we were left loose, which in another *English* is too true, too often left undone. He that binds all things with his *Word*, makes them up in his Wisdom, and wraps them in the *Mantle* of his protection, was content to be bound up as a *Child*, when he *was* a *Child*; as if he had wholly laid *aside* his power, humbled himself to be under the power and discretion of a simple Woman, *Nurse* and *Mother*. To teach us again the humility of a *Child*, to behave our selves in every condition, and submit in it as it requires; if *Children*, to be content with the usage of children; if *Subjects*, with the condition of subjects; if *Servants*, of servants, and the like.

The *Clothes* his dear Mother wrapt him in are 4. the very *badges* of humility; *and poyor* is a *rag*, or torn and tatter'd *Clothes*: *such* were the clothes she wrapt him in, such he is so humble, he will be content with, even with *rags*. What make we then such ado for *clothes*? *Jacob* would bargain with *God* no further then for rayment to put on: he covenanted with him not for *fashion*, nor *colour*, nor *stuff*, nor *trimming*: and our Blessed Lord here is content with what comes next. But, *Lord*! to see what ado have *we* about our Apparel! this *Lace*, and that *Trimming*; this *Fashion*, and that *Colour*; these *Jewels*, and those *Accoutrements*; this *Cloth*, and that *stuff*; this *Silk*, and that *Velvet*; this *Silver*, and that *Gold*; this way of *wearing*, and that *garb* in them; as if our whole life were *Rayment*.

ment, our *Clothes* Heaven, and our salvation the *handsom* wearing them. We forget, we forget our sweet *Saviours* rags, his poor ragged Swadling-clothes, and our Garments witness against us to our faces, our pride, our follies, our vanities at the best. He that, as *Job* says, *Job xxxviii. 9.* makes the Cloud the garment of the Sea, and thick darkness a swadling-band for it, he lets his own Swadling-bands be made of any thing, his own Clothes of any *sort*, any torn pieces, to give us a lesson not to be solicitous of what we should put on, or wherewith we should be clothed, but be content to be clothed as he does the Grass, *when* and *how* he pleases. 'Tis no shame to be in rags and tatters, if they be but *Christs*, if they come by *him*, not by our own ill husbandries, and intemperances; if for *his* sake or cause we are brought to them. Clothes are but to cover shame, and defend us from the cold; they make not a man, nor commend any to God. *Lazarus's* rags are better wearing than *Dives* his Purple and fine Linnen. There is a part of *humility* as well as *modesty*, that consists in Apparel; and this part is here commended to us by our *Saviours* condition, that howsoever the giddy *Gallants* of the world think of it, the sober *Christians* of the Church should not think strange to see themselves in rags, which our *Lord* hath thus rent and torn out to us.

5. Well, but though he was content to be wrapt in *Swadling-clothes*, and those none of the handsomest neither, may we not look for a *Cradle* at least to lay him in? No matter what we may look for, we are like to find no better than a *Manger* for that purpose, and a lock of *Hay* for his *Bed*, and for his *Pillow*, and for his *Mantle* too. A poor condition, and an humble one indeed, for *him* whose *Chariot* is the Clouds, whose *Palace* is in *Heaven*, whose *Throne* is with the most High. What place can we hereafter think too mean for any of us? Stand thou here, sit thou there, under my Foot-stool, places of exceeding honour compared to *this*. What, not a room among men, not among the meanest, in some smoky *Cottage*, or ragged *Cell*; but among *Beasts*? whither hath thy humility driven thee, O *Saviour* of mankind? Why, meer *pity* of a Woman in thy *Mother's* case, O *Lord*, would have made the most obdurate have removed her from the *Horses* feet, the *Asses* heels, the company of unruly *Beasts*, from the ordure and nastiness of a *Stable*: But that we, O *Lord*, might see what we had made our selves, meer *Beasts*, as lustful as the *Horse*, as fortish as the *Ass*, as proud, and untam'd as the *Bulls*, as bent to earthly drudgeries and yokes as the *Oxe* and *Heifer*, that thou wert fain even to come thither to find us out and redeem us. *This* note will humble us if any can, and make us not think much if *God* at any time deal with us as *Beasts*, whip us, and spur us, beat us with the staff, prick us with the goad, feed us with hard meat, like such things as they, seeing we are now become like them, as says the *Psalmist*, *Psal. xlix. 12. 20.* To descend from the Society of *Cberubims* and *Seraphims*, and all the Host of *Heaven*, to be the companion of *Beasts*; from the bosom of his *Father*, to the concave of a *Manger*, is such a descent of humility, that we have no more understanding than the very beasts to express it. Go man, and sit down now in the lowest room thou canst, thou canst not sit so low as lay thy *Saviour*. *S. Jerome* was so much devoted to the contemplation of this strange humility of his *Master* in this particular, that he spent many of his years near the place of this hallowed *Manger*. And *S. Luke* in *S. Ambrose's* interpretation pleases himself much in the recounting of this circumstance of his *Saviour's* Birth; and indeed any may so conjecture it, that considers how often he repeats it in so little compass, thrice within ten verses, the 7. 12. and 16.

And

And say I, let others seek him in the Courts of *Princes*, in the head of an *Army*, under a Canopy of *State*, in a *Cradle* of *Gold*, or *Ivory*; I will seek him to day *where* he was laid, whither the *Angel* sent the *Shepherds* to seek him, where the *Shepherds* found him in a *Manger*, in a *Stable*, in the humble and *lowly heart*; that in an humble sense of his own unworthiness cries out with *Agur*, *Prov. xxx. 2.* Surely *I am more brutish than man, and have not the understanding of a man*, even thinks himself fit for a *Manger*, nay, not worthy of it, since his *Lord* lay in it.

6. But the *Manger* is not the *worst*, the dis-respect that *forc'd* him thither, *that's* the hardest, *that there was no room for them in the Inn*, *avris, eis*, no room for *them*, mark that; 'tis not said there was *no room*, no room at all in the *Inn*, but *none* for *them*; they were so poor it seems, and their outward appearance so contemptible, that notwithstanding the condition of a *woman* great with Child, and so *near* her time, they were put away without respect or regard. To have fall'n by *chance* or some accident into so *mean* a place, or have been *driven* thither by some sudden storm, or tempest, and so frightened into travel, had been no such wonder *peradventure*; but to be driven thither by the unkindness and inhumanity of ones own *Countrymen*, and *Tribe* too, is a trial of *humility* indeed; but to *choose* to be so (for *he* knew all from the beginning before it came to pass) so to contrive all things for it, and suffer the uncivil *ruggedness* of men to drive him out to dwell and lodge among *Beasts*; to have *contempt* thrown upon his *poverty*, and neglect added to all inconveniences, *is* sure to teach us humility in the hardest usages we meet with. *He* that made all places, finds none himself, and is *content*. *He* that hath many Mansions for others in his *Fathers* house, hath not the least lobby in an *Inn*, and *refines* not at it. *He* that would have given this churlish *Host* an *eternal* house in Heaven for asking for, cannot have a *Cabin* for any hire, because his *parents* seem so poor; and yet he fetches not fire from Heaven to consume him for his inhumanity.

How *unlike* us, I pray, for whom no downy *pallets* are soft enough, no room sufficiently spacious and *Majestick*, no furniture enough costly, no attendance sufficient, all respect *too* little. Do we ever call to mind this our *Saviours* first entertainment in the world, or think we are no better than our *Master*? He could have come in state, in glory, in all magnificence and pomp, attended with all respect and honour, but would not for our sakes *most*, that we might see what he most delights in, and learn it as much by his *example* as his *precept*.

7. And yet there is a *seventh degree* of his humility, to let all this be done to him in such a *publick time and place*, when the whole world was met together to be taxed, where so many were gathered in such a place of meeting as an *Inn*, when the whole City is filled from one corner to another, *there and then* to be so used, so despised, so scorned, as a sign of men, and the *out-cast* of the people, ranked with the *Horse* and *Asses*, to have so many witnesses of affronts, and contempts put upon him, to condescend and order so to have it done, is the *highest* of humility: for not only to think meanly of *our selves*, but to desire to have all *others* think meanly of us, is so hard a *Text* that I fear me few can bear it. Whatever we suffer, or to whatsoever meannesses and under offices we condescend, we would not willingly have others think the worse of us for it: there is too oft a pride in our good works, that lies lurking under them; we scarce can throw it off; but 'tis *that*, 'tis *that* above the rest that we should endeavour, to be content to be trampled on, and despised for him who was so for us.

Sum we up now the points of *Christs* humility, to leave his *Fathers* bosom for the *Virgins* Womb, the great riches in *Heaven* for great poverty upon *earth*, to wrap up his *immensity* in *Swadling-clothes*, his *Robes* of glory in *Clouts* and *Rags*, forsake his *Throne* for a *Manger*, the adoration of *Saints* and *Angels* for the dis-respects of a *surly Host*, to be seen in this mean pickle to all the *world*. *Domine in quis similis tui?* O *Lord* who is like to thee, who is like to thee may we say *this way* also in thy *humility* as well as in thy *glory*. And sure we cannot hereafter any of us grudge to be in *rags*, in *Sheep-skins*, and *Goat-skins*, in *Dens* and *Caves* of the *earth*, destitute, neglected, forsaken, repuls'd, contemned, but humble our selves to the meanest condition without any great reflection upon our *Birth* or former *estates* and *conditions*, if *Christ* shall at any time require it of us; seeing the *Servant* is not better than his *Master*, nor the dry tree than the green: and if to *him* all this was done, we should frame our minds at least to a *humility* ready to undergo it.

I have run over the *plain song* of the words, the plain lesson of *humility* that is in them without straining. I must back over again to descant out the *mysteries* that lie under them.

And *she* brought forth. Before *she* travell'd *she* brought forth, before her pain came *she* was delivered of a *man-child*; so prophesied *Isaiah*, *Isa.* lxvi. 7. and so the *Fathers* do apply it: *She* conceived without *corruption*, and brought forth without *sorrow*; the very *Text* may bear witness to it: for *she* wrapt it in the *Swadling-clothes*, and *she* laid it in the *Manger*, says *St. Luke*. No women it seems near to help her: for *she* who needed not the help of *man* to conceive, needed no help of *woman* sure to bring forth: no *corruption*, no *sorrow*. A great *mystery*, none ever like it, to begin with.

But *she* a *Virgin*, thus bringing forth, affords us a *second* too, to instruct us, what souls they are of whom *Christ* is born; *Pure* and *Virgin*, *Chaste* and *Holy* only that bring forth *him*. And the *First-born* he will be, ever should be of all our thoughts, will be acknowledged so whenever born, *primogenitus*, one before whom none; for *that* only is the sense of *First-born* here, not referring to any *after*, but to none *before*, *Col.* i. 14. *begotten before any creature*, in honour above all creatures, endued with all the *rights* of *primogeniture*, even as *man* also. Now *three* things belonged to the *First-born Son*, the *Priesthood*, the *preheminance*, or *regal Dignity*, and a *double* or *larger portion*. He is the *High-Priest* of our *profession*, *Heb.* iii. 1. The great *High-Priest* of the *Christian Profession* and *Religion*. He 2. the *Head of his Church*, *Col.* i. 18. *To whom all power is given in heaven and earth*, *S. Mat.* xxviii. 18. He 3. also anointed with the *oil of gladness* above his fellows, *Psal.* xlv. 8. *A portion of grace* far above others, *S. John* i. 16. *That in all things he might have the preheminance, being the First-born, as well of the dead as of the living*, says *S. Paul*, *Col.* i. 18. All these *mysteries* we have wrapt up in the title of the *First-born*, that by it he is intimated to be our *Prince*, our *Priest*, our *elder Brother*, one in whom all fulness, who should be therefore so acknowledg'd and us'd, be *first* entertain'd in our affections, be the *first* birth our souls should travel with, and our affections and actions bring forth.

But there are more wrapt up in his being wrapt in *Swadling-clothes*, then can readily be exprest. All the benefits that came by him were wrapt up and not understood, till the *Clothes* both of the *Manger* and the *Grave* were unwrap by his *Resurrection*. He seem'd not what he was, shewed not what he came for until *then*. All the while before nothing but *folds*, and things folded up, the *Cross* made up or involved in his *Cratch* (for of the

the form of a Cross the Cratch some say was made) mans salvation in Gods Incarnation, the Churches growth in the Virgins bringing forth, many brethren in the First-born among them.

His *Glory* 2. that was wrapt up in those Clothes, his *God-head* in the Man-hood, the *Word* in *Flesh*, *Eternity* in days, *Righteousness* in a body like to a body of Sin, *Wisdom* in the infancy of a Child, *Abundance* in Poverty, *Glory* in disrespect, the *Fountain* of Grace in a dry barren dusty Land, eternal light in Clouds, and everlasting life in the very image of death; will you see the Clothes that hid this treasure, not from men only, but from Devils? The espousals of just *Joseph*, and holy *Mary* hid *Christs* Conception of a *Virgin*. The crying of an Infant in a *Cradle*, the bringing forth without sorrow. The Purification her entire *Virginity*. The Circumcision his extraordinary Generation, without any sin. His flight conceal'd his Power, his *Baptism* his unspotted *Innocence*. His open Prayers to his Father his infinite *Authority* and *Equality* with him. His sad sufferings obscur'd his perfect *Righteousness*. The poverty and meanness of his life the height and greatness of his Birth: and the ignominy of his Death the immensity of his *Glory*.

His *Gospel* 3. that was wrapt up in Clothes, that seeing we might see and not presently understand, a *mystery* kept secret since the world began; his Doctrine wrapt in *parables*, his Grace covered in the *Sacraments*, the inward Grace in the outward *Elements*, his great *Apostolick* Function in poor simple *Fishermen*, his *Universal Church* in a few obscur'd Disciples of *Judea*, the height of his knowledge in the simplicity of *Faith*, the excellency of his Precepts in the plainness of his Speech, and the *Glory* of the end they drive to in the *humility* of the way they lead: well may the Prophet exclaim, *Vere tu es Deus absconditus*, Psal. lv. 15. *Verily thou art a God that hidest thy self*, O God of Israel, the Saviour. Well may we admire thy folds and wrappings up, O God, and not strive to pry into thy secrets, thy goings out, and thy comings in; and all thy counsels are past finding out: to thee only it belongs to know them, to us to obey and submit to them, and adore them.

Yet 4. he was thus wrapt up to shew us our condition, that the beauty and sweetness of *Christianity* as well as *Christ*, of *Christians* as well as *Christ*, appears not outwardly, or but in rags. We cannot see the *Christians* strength for the *weaknesses* that surround him, nor his joy for the *afflictions* that encompass him, nor his happiness for the worldly calamities that oppress him, nor his wisdom for the *foolishness* of Preaching, that so much delights him, nor his riches for the *poor condition* he is sometimes brought to, nor his honour for the *scoffs* and *reproaches* of the world he often labours under. He seems *unknown*, when he is *well known*; dying when he only lives, kill'd when he is but chastned, sorrowful though always rejoicing, poor yet making rich, as having nothing, and possessing all things, 2 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Thus the *Christian* you see is wrapt up, as soon as he is born; nay, and his very life also is wrapt up with *Christ* in God, Col. iii. 3.

Nay lastly, our practice and duty is wrapt up with him. He is wrapt up in poor Clothes, that we might be wrapt up in *solâ primâ*, the best Robe, his Robe of *Righteousness*, that we might put on the white Linen of the *Saints*. Wrapt up again. 2. he was, his hands and feet bound up like a Childs, that by the vertue of it our hands and feet might be loosed to do the works of *Christ*, and run the way of peace: he is made a Child that we might be perfect men in him; he brought forth, that we might bring forth the fruits of good works, and godly living.

The next *mysteries* lie coucht with him in the *Manger*; where in a strait and narrow compasse he lies, that he may open Heaven *wide* to all believers, all that keep a strait and strict watch over their ways and actions.

Where 2. uses to lie the Beasts provender; *there* lies he also who is the bread that came down from Heaven to feed us, who are often more unreasonable than the *Beasts*; *they* know their owner: the *Oxe* and *Ass* does so, says *God*, but my people do not *theirs*; *they* will but satisfie nature, *we* burthen it; *they* will but eat and drink to satisfie, *men* are grown so sensual they cannot be satisfied. We have made our selves fit for the *Manger*, which made *Christ* lie there, to see if *he* could fill us, seeing nothing can.

3. In the *Manger* among the Beasts, that we might sadly consider *what* we have made our selves, and change our sensual lives, now *he* is come in to the *Stable* to call us out.

4. *There* he lies in a place without any furniture or trimming up, that we might by the place be instructed that the beauty of *Christ* wants no external setting out: that 2. his beauty is *omnis ab intus*, all within, and his Spouse is *all glorious* within, *Psal.* xlv. That 3. our eyes might not be diverted from him by any outward splendours, but wholly fixt upon *himself*. That 4. by his very first appearance we might know *his* Kingdom was not of this *world*; he was no temporal *King*, we might see by his Furniture and Palace: that *lastly* we might know he came to teach us *new* ways of life, and sanctifie to us the way of poverty and humility.

5. In the *Stable*. For so *στάβλη*, the word for *Manger* is, a place for *Horses* by the way; that we might understand our *life* here is but a *journey*, and our longest stay but that of Travellers by the way; and therefore there he places himself for all comers, by his *Incarnation* and Birth, to conduct them home into their Country, our Country which is above.

Nor is it 6. without a *mystery* that there was no room for him in the *Inn*. Inns are places of much resort and company, and no wonder if *Christ* be too commonly thrust out *thence*. They are made houses of licentiousness and revelling; no wonder if *Christ* be not suffered to be *there*. They are places of more worldly business; and no wonder neither that there is often *there* no room for *him*, when the *business* is so different from *his*, and mens minds so much taken up with it: Into the *Stable*, or whither he will he may go for them, they heed him not; there is no room for him in the *Inn*, that is where much *company*, or *riot*, or too much *worldly* business is.

That there was no room for him in the *Inn*, puts us to enquire how it came about, and we find it was a time of the greatest concourse; and in that also *lastly* there is a *mystery*, all this done at such a time, that so *all* might know that it belonged to *all* to know the *Birth* and posture of their *Saviour*, his coming, and his coming in humility to save *them*. At such a time, in such a place, in such a case, so poor, so forlorn, so despicable, without respect, without conveniences wast thou born, O *Lord*, that *we* through thy want might *abound*, through *thy* neglect might be *regarded*, through *thy* want of room, room on earth, might find *room* in heaven: O happy *Rags*, more precious than the Purple of *Kings* and *Emperours*! O *holy Manger*, more glorious than *their* golden *Thrones*! The poverty of *those* *Rags* are *our* riches, the *baseness* of the *Manger* our *glory*, *his* wrapping and binding up, *our* loosing from Death and *Hell*; and his *no* room, our eternal *Mansions*.

Thus we have *twice* run over the *Text*, pickt out both the moral and the

the mystery of every circumstance in it of our *Saviour's* Birth; I hope we have shewed you mysteries enow, and you have seen humility enough. But it is not enough to see the one or the other, unless now we take up the *Virgin Maries* part, which is behind, *bring forth* this *First-born* to our selves; suffer him to be born *in* us, who was born for *us*, and bring forth *Christ* in our lives, wrap him and lay him up with all the tenderness of a *Mother*.

The pure Virgin pious soul is this *She* that brings forth *Christ*; the nourishing and cherishing of him and all his gifts and graces is *this* wrapping him in *Swadling-clothes*; the laying up his Word, his Promises, and Precepts in our hearts, is the laying him in the *Manger*.

What though there be no room for him in the *Inn*, though the world will not entertain him? the devout soul will find a place to lay him in, though it have nothing of its own but rags, a poor *ragged* righteousness: for our righteousness, says the *Prophet*, is but *menstruous rags*; yet the best it hath it will lay him in: and though it have nothing but a *Manger*, a poor strait narrow soul, none of the cleanliest neither to lodge him in; yet such as it is, he shall command it, his lying there will cleanse it, and *his* righteousness piece up our rags.

What though there be no room for him in the *Inn*? I hope there is in our houses for him: 'Tis *Christmas* time; and let's keep open house for him; let *his* Rags be our *Christmas* Rayment, his *Manger* our *Christmas* cheer, his *Stable* our *Christmas* great Chamber, Hall, Dining-room. We must clothe with him, and feed with him, and lodge with him at *this* Feast. He is now ready by and by to give *himself* to eat; you may see him wrapt ready in the *Swadling-clothes* of his blessed *Sacrament*: you may behold him laid upon the *Altar* as in his *Manger*, do but make room for him, and we will bring him forth and you shall look upon him, and handle him, and feed upon him: bring we only the rags of a rent, and torn, and broken, and contrite heart; the white linen cloths of *pure* intentions and *honest* affections to *swathe* him in: *wrap* him up fast, and lay him close to our souls and bosoms: 'tis a *day of mysteries*, 'tis a mysterious business we are about; *Christ* wrapt up, *Christ* in the *Sacrament*, *Christ* in a mystery; let us be content to let it go so, believe, admire, and adore it. 'Tis sufficient that we know *Christ's* swadling-clothes, *his* Righteousness will keep us warmer than all our Winter Garments: *his* rags hold out more storms than our thickest clothes, let's put them on. His *Manger* feeds us better than all the *Asian* delicacies, all the dainties of the world; let's feed our souls upon him. His *Stable* is not hang'd here with *Arras*, or deck'd with gilded furniture: but 'tis hang'd infinitely with *gifts* and *graces*: the *Stable* is dark, but there is the *Light* of the world to enlighten it. The smell of the *Beasts* our *sins*, are *perfumed* and taken away with the sweet odours of holy pardon and forgiveness: the incondite noise of the *Oxe*, and *Ass*, and *Horse* are still'd with the musick of the heavenly *Host*; the noise of our sins, with the promises of the *Gospel* this day brought to us. Let us not then think much to take him wrapt up, that is in a *Mystery*, without examining how and which way we receive him; 'tis in the condition he comes to us. Let us be content with him in his *rags*, in his humblest and lowest condition; 'tis the way he comes to *day*: let us our selves wrap and lay him up in the best place we can find for him, though the best we have will be little better than a *Manger*.

What though there be no room for him in the *Inn*, in worldly souls, I hope yet *ours* will entertain him, invite him too, and say as *Laban* said to *Abraham's*

Abraham's servant, Gen. xxiv. 31. *Come in, thou blessed of the Lord, come in, come in thou blessed Child, come in; wherefore standest thou without? I have prepared the house, and room for the Camels, the house for thee; my soul for thee thy self, and my body for the Camels, those outward Elements that are to convey thee. They are not fitted, they are not fitted as thou deservest; but thou that here acceptedst of rags, accept my poor ragged preparations. Thou that refusedst not the Manger, refuse not the Manger of my unworthy heart to lie in; but accept a room in thy Servants soul; turn in to him and abide with him. Thy poverty, O sweet Jesus, shall be my patrimony, thy Weakness my Strength, thy Rags my Riches, thy Manger my Kingdom; all the dainties of the world, but chaff to me in comparison of thee, and all the room in the world, no room to that wheresoever it is, that thou vouchsafest to be: Heaven it is wheresoever thou stayest or abidest; and I will change all the house and wealth I have, for thy Rags and Manger.*

These holy births and raptures, or the like, must our souls this day bring forth to answer this days blessed birth. 'Tis a day of bringing forth, sure then there's no being barren. Bring forth fruits therefore worthy of repentance; these, Christ this day came to call for: bring forth fruits worthy of the day, and the blessing of it, Holiness, Thankfulness, and Humility, Faith and Piety, they become it. Bring our first-born, our first and chiefest thoughts, our prime and chief endeavours to attend him from his Cratch to his Cross: wrap we up and bind our souls with holy resolutions to his perpetual service, lay them humbly at his feet, let not his Poverty, or Rags, or Manger, or Reproach fright or scare us from it, but make room for him, and receive him; lay him up and bind him fast unto our souls, visit him with the Shepherds, and sing of him with the Angels, and rejoyce in his Birth, with all its happy and mysterious circumstances. So when the first-born from the dead shall come again to raise us up, come wrapt in Clouds, and rob'd in Glory, we shall be caught up to meet him in the Clouds, and be received of him into eternal dwellings, there to follow him in long white robes, and be with him for ever.

Be it so unto thy Servants, O Lord.

THE THIRD SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

St. JOHN i. 16.

And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.



OF his fulness! of *whose* fulness? of *Verbum Caro's*, ver. 14. for thither this *Ejus* points us, this day leads us. To the *word* made *Flesh*, to *Christ's*, to *His*. Yet of his fulness when so made? Of his *emptiness* it would be rather. Of his emptiness to *day* it is, that we have all received, that we still receive all: There is nothing we receive, but 'tis from this days emptiness; and there is nothing that we receive not from it, from *his* this days emptying himself into the form of a servant, from this days *exinanition*.

Yet is it a day of *fulness* too. His thus very emptying himself for us, his thus very emptying himself upon us, is the very fulness of his grace, and favour to us: the day then, wherein it was, a day of fulness, wherein *he* was *full*, and *we* were *fill'd*; he full of grace, and we fill'd from it. The fulness of *time*, the *Apostle* calls it upon this accout, *Gal. iii. 4*. A day wherein *Law* and *Prophets*, *Types* and *Promises* came all to their full, were fulfilled: we received them all fulfilled to us. A day wherein *he* gave, and *we* received, gave himself with all his fulness, and we received him. So then we here did, and I hope we here will do so too.

A day then *this* worthy to be observed in our generation, wherein to fill our *hearts* with gladness, and our *tongues* with joy, to return back somewhat for our great receipts, to confess we received a great grace to *day* by *his* coming to us, *grace* upon *grace*, favour upon favour by it. To return therefore 2. *Gratiam pro gratiâ*, thanks to him for his grace, and do it 3. to the *full* too, with *full* mouths, in *full* Congregations, so to answer to his fulness somewhat like.

For to *Us*, this, *we*, reacheth too, *this* fulness pours out still. *we* therefore in all reason to acknowledge it, as well as any *we* whosoever, at any time whensoever, at all times whatsoever; but at the *full* time, *this* time howsoever. No time comes amiss to do it in, but this time it comes
best;

best, a word in season always best. Now here's a *day* of fulness, and a *Text* of fulness. There wants nothing but our fulness of praise and duty for it; fulness of humility and thankfulness to receive it. All the *we* in the *Text* received it so no doubt, all that will be of the *we*, of St. *Johns* Congregation, will receive it in the day, will be glad *this* day to receive it, and thank *God* for it. *God* for sending, *Christ* for coming with this fulness to us: be glad with *Abraham* to see a day, with the *Shepherds* to hear a *Text*, that brings news and tidings of it, be full glad at it.

And it will become us well to do so, we have good reason, for all *this* fulness is for *us*. *His* fulness for *our* filling: *He* full that *we* might be filled. The fulness *his*, the redundance *ours*, ours the benefit, we receive the grace, grace for grace, one grace after another, till we also come to a kind of fulness too, *the fulness of the stature of Christ*.

That we may then receive it as we ought, know we that in the *Text* there is a *fulness* and a *filling* to be considered: the *fulness* *his*, the *filling* *ours*. Of *his* fulness *we* all, there's *his* fulness, a complete, gracious, glorious, communicative, universal fulness. Of *his* we have all received, and grace for grace; *there's our filling*, a good, plentiful, gracious, universal filling too.

Yet to understand them fully *both*, both the *fulness* and the *filling*, we must consider this *fulness*. First, *whose* it is. 2. *what* it is. 3. In what *respect* it is. 4. How *great* it is. 5. How *large* it is, five particulars. First, *His* it is whom we read of a *verse* or two before; for *ejus* is a *Relative*, and refers to the *Antecedent*. Secondly, A *fulness* it is that is answerable to his *greatness*, fulness with a double *Article* *etiam* an *emphatick* fulness, a perfect fulness. Thirdly, To him it is, or his it is, as he is *Verbum Caro*, ver. 14. *God* and *Man* both, *both* natures fulness, according to them *both*: for this *ejus* has not more syllables than natures, and relates as well to the *one* as to the *other*. Fourthly, So *great* it is, that it may, nay, that it does *communicate* it self, and yet is *fulness* still. *De plenitudine*, nor *case*, nor *preposition* can take any thing from it, to diminish it. Fifthly, So *large* that it extends as far as *all*: all some way or other partake of it, more or less, according to their capacity and receipt.

Consider we must again 2. in the *filling*. That 1. 'tis not an *Active*, but a *Passive* filling, as it were, a *being* filled, a receiving: that 2. 'tis a receiving *of*, not a receiving *all*, not a *perfect* fulness, but a *proportional*. That 'tis 3. a receiving *gratis*, nothing but meer *gratia* in it, of grace, not of desert. That 'tis 4. yet a receiving *sufficient*, *full*, every one enough; and that not single grace neither, but one *for* another, one *after* another, one *upon* another. That 'tis 5. a general business, *all* receiving somewhat, some grace or other, and that seldom or never by it self: none without receiving. That 6. it is from *Christ*, from him it is, from *his* grace, and from *his* fulness, that we receive whatever we receive. That *lastly*, grace for grace it is, for some end and purpose it is, that we receive it, *receive* grace, that we may *say* grace, give thanks, and acknowledge it. 2. *Receive* grace, that we may *shew* grace; receive grace from *God*, that we may shew it unto *men*. 3. Receive *grace* even *for* grace it self, to increase and grow in it daily more and more, till both it and we come both to perfection.

Of all these this is the *sum*, that in *Christ* there is fulness, *all* fulness, fulness in *both* natures, fulness that contents not it self, till it have *fill'd* others, till it fill us *all*. That from this fulness we receive, receive all we have; *all we have*, though not all *he has*, all sorts of graces fitting for us; and

and all *gratis*, are therefore to give thanks for it, as we have received, so to repay again *grace* for *grace*. And of all, this is the scope, the *Exaltation* of *Christ*, and of his *grace*, the scope of the *Text*, the *Sermon*, and the *day*. 'Tis but making it *yours* too, and then all will be full. And that it may so, I begin now particularly to open to you all this fulness; where I am first to shew you whose it is. *His fulness*.

1. *His* you know is a *Relative*, must relate to somewhat that is before; *His*, to some that was spoken of before: *who's that?* one to whom Saint *John* bare witness, that *he was before*, ver. 15. long before in the *beginning*, ver. 1. but was fain to draw nearer, e're we could see *him*, or his fulness; to draw himself into the flesh, e're we could fully discern his *grace*, or behold his *glory*, was made flesh, *the word made flesh*, ver. 14. the only begotten of the *Father*, become the only born of a *Virgin Mother*, before we hear of any one *full of grace and truth*.

This *word*, this eternal *word*, this only begotten Son of *God*, is *He*, this, *His*, belongs to: yet this fulness, *then* fully *His*, when he was made the Son of *Man*. In that *first* appeared the fulness of his *love*, the fulness of his *word* and *Promise*, the fulness of his *Grace* and *Mercy*, the infinite *grace* and *favour* done to our flesh, the fulness of his *truth*, and *reality* above all those *empty* types and shadows, which more amus'd, then fill'd the world. The *body*, that's of *Christ*, says the *Apostle*, Col. ii. 17. the full body of *truth*, full bodied *grace*, never till he took a body to make it full. The *Law* that could not fill us; the very life of things there was poured out at the foot of the *Altar*, and all the rest went into *smoke*. The *Prophets* they could not fill us with any thing but expectation, fill us with good words; but alas! they are but wind, would have proved so too, had not *he* embodied them. All the *world* could not fill us, the fulness of time was not come upon it, till the Son of *fulness* came: all that was in it till he came was vanity and emptiness; could neither satisfy it self nor us. 'Tis *Christ* that filleth all in all, Ephes. i. 23. He the end of the *Law*, the completion of the *Prophets*, the fulness of the *world*. To *him* it is that *this* fulness is attributed, to the *fulness of Christ*, Ephes. iv. 13. In *him* it is, *it dwells*, Col. i. 19. So it pleased *God*, says the *Apostle* there; so to gather together in one all things in *Christ*, both which are in *heaven*, and which are in *earth*, even in *him*, Ephes. i. 10. Fulness must needs be his, in whom all things are gathered altogether, in whom *earth* and *heaven* together.

2. Thus the fulness you see is *his*, and it being the fulness of *Heaven* and *Earth*, you see in general *what* his fulness is. In particular it cannot be measured. *It is as high as Heaven, what canst thou do? deeper then Hell, what canst thou know? the measure of it is longer then the earth, and broader then the Sea*, Job xi. 8, 9. There is no end of his fulness, no more than of his greatness: In him are hid all the treasures of *wisdom* and *knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. all wisdom and knowledge treasured up in *him*, all in the very knowing him, all the very treasures of wisdom and knowledge, the choicest to be found there, all even hidden and obscured by *his*, swallow'd up in that; *he* knows all, and to know *him* is to know all the highest *Wisdom*, the deepest knowledge is but filliness and ignorance, in respect of *his*, hides it self at the comparison, as lesser lights do at the *Sun's* glaring Beams, in *him* is all knowledge, and in the knowledge of *him* is all wisdom hidden and contained. In him 2. is the *fulness of grace*, Full of grace are thy lips, Psal. xlv. 3. and if the lip's full, the heart's not empty; for out of the abundance there, the fulness here, the very stature of *fulness*, Ephes. iv. 13. In him 3. is the *fulness of truth*, ver. 14. so full, that he is fill'd the very

truth it self, St. John xiv. 6. *I am the truth*, the truth of the promises, all the promises since the Creation. All the promises of God are in him *yea*, and in him *Amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. The truth of all the *Types*, and *Shadows*, and *Sacrifices* from the worlds first cradle: the true *Paschal Lamb*, the true *Scape-Goat*, the true *High-Priest*, *Adam*, and *Isaac*, and *Joseph*, and *Joshua*, and *Samson*, and *David*, and *Solomon*, were but the representations of him, or what was to be more substantially done by him. They are but the draughts and pictures, he the substance all the way. To him they all related, had not their offices, actions, or passions, scarce their very names fulfilled but in him, all their fulness was in him. Their truth, and all truth besides, the doctrine of truth never fully delivered, never fully revealed or known till he came with it. We knew it but in pieces, we saw it but in clouds, we heard it but in dark and obscure Prophecies, till he came a light into the world, to manifest it all; 'tis then we first hear of the whole will of God, and the declaring that, the whole counsel of God, Acts xx. 27. truth was not at the fulness, till he taught it.

Nor 4. was his the fulness of wisdom and knowledge, grace and truth, but of the Spirit too: not by measure, St. John iii. 34. but immeasurably full He, all the graces of the Spirit, and all of them to the full in him. The Spirit himself proceeds from him, St. John xv. 26. he must therefore needs be full of that.

Full 5. with the fulness of Riches too, the unsearchable riches of Christ, says St. Paul, Eph. iii. 8. so full that we can find out no bottom of it, come to no end of it, unsearchable.

His fulness 6. was the fulness of Glory too, we saw it, says St. John, two verses before the Text; such a glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, and that sure is all the fulness of God. Yet to put all out of doubt, this fulness was the fulness of the God-head too expressly, all the fulness of it, and all of it bodily too, says St. Paul, Col. ii. 3. Bodily, how's that? why, that's full in all dimensions, in all dimensions of a body, length, and breadth, and height, and depth; the length and infinity of his Power, the extent and breadth of his Love, the height and eminency of his Majesty, the depth and unfathomedness of his wisdom, all met together in Christ.

3. Nor will this seem strange at all, if we consider for our third point, in this fulness, how and in what respect 'tis his: and 'tis his both as he is God, and as man. He could not be thus full as I have told you, unless he were God, could not have the God-head dwell in him bodily, unless God were in the body, unless he were incarnate God. Nor could other kinds of his fulness be in him, unless he were man. He could not be a full and sufficient Sacrifice, and so offered for one, had he not been man, nor a perfect High Priest to mediate for us, if not taken from among men; the great promise that contains all the rest, that of the seed of the woman, could not have been fulfilled, would not have had its fulness from him but as man. The very attribute of fulness speaks him God; none full but God; no fulness or satisfaction but in him; yet some kinds of his fulness evidence him man, are not the fulnesses of God, as God; but as God made man: and so the Evangelist by the Context delivers it: as the fulness of the word made flesh, of the eternal word becoming man. This fulness is the fulness of Christ, and Christ is both God and Man, so the fulness of both.

4. And such a fulness, that none runs over, anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows; that's fulness, but that's not all; so above them too it is, as it runs down upon his fellows: he is not full only for himself, for

as it was, that he was born, that he was given, that he was anointed, that he was full, full of grace, and full of truth, and full of glory, that we might be fill'd with grace, and truth, and glory. He indeed is the head that was anointed with oyl, but that head is *ours*; the Church is the body upon which it runs down from the head.

5. And that not to the near parts alone, to the beard or shoulders, but even to the skirts of the garment it runs, so full it runs. *Ex hoc omnes*, all the members, nay all the clothes; not only those that are true members of the Church, but even those who have but an outward relation to it: all that have but an external right or adherence, as skirts, and clothes, have yet some benefit of this oyl, of this fulness of his. Christ is no niggard, his fulness nothing so stinted (as some narrow and envious souls will have it) here's enough for all: enough for the whole world to take, and yet leave all full still. You may light a thousand candles at one, and yet the light of it no way lessened by it. You may fill a thousand worlds, if there were so many, from his fulness, and yet he never a whit the less full. Take all you can cope, all that will, nay all that are or shall be, here's still for all, as much as at the first; O the depth of the riches of the fulness of Christ! I could fill the hour, I could fill the day, I could fill all the remnant of my days with the discourses of it; and should I do it, I could yet say nothing of it, near the full, but be as far from sounding the depth of it at the end, as I was at the beginning. I pass therefore to that which we can better comprehend, easier reach; our filling out of this fulness, the second general.

2. Our filling is here said to be receiving. Be our fulness never so great, it is no other, we have received it all. Alas poor things, we have nothing of our selves. *What hast thou that thou hast not received?* says the Apostle; 1 Cor. iv. 7. Is it grace? that grows not in our gardens; it comes from Paradise: what we have is transplanted from thence. Is it nature? why that too is received. We did not make our selves, we received as well our natural as our spiritual endowments, from him that made us. Is it glory? why, God calls it his glory: a thing he will not share, but by beams and glances. What should I now mention worldly Riches, Estate, and Honour? they are too evidently received, to be denied they are so. 'Tis the blessing of the Lord that makes rich, Prov. xx. 22. so Riches are received. I shall deliver him, and bring him to honour, says God, Psal. xci. 15. so Honour is received. And the earth hath God given to the children of men, Psal. cxv. 16. so our Estates and Lands, every Clod and Turf of them is received. For the earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof; and from his fulness we receive of it what we have.

Enough this to humble us; for if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not? 'tis St. Paul's inference upon it. Thou hast no reason to boast thy self O man, thy Honour, thy Riches, thy good Parts, thy Graces, they are not from thy self, thou didst but receive them, thou hast nothing of thine own, why art thou proud?

And 2. if all received, all we have nothing but so many receipts; look we then well to our accounts, they are things we are to reckon for: we had best see how we expend them, that at the general Audit we may give up our accounts with joy.

To do so, 'twill be convenient to think often of our receipts, our own poverty, and indigence; a third business we may learn hence, to grow sensible of our emptinesses and necessities, that we are a meer bill of receipts, so much received to day, so much yesterday, so much day by day;

item our souls, *item* our bodies, *item* our health, *item* our wealth, and so onward, nothing but received, and without receiving, nothing.

Upon this reflection upon our *own* vacuities, we cannot 4. but open our hearts to receive, our hands to take any thing from *his* fulness to supply us; to desire to have them fill'd, our selves fill'd out of his fulness, something thence to make us full.

2. Yet 2. we must not expect to be so fill'd, that we should have an absolute or perfect plenitude, a plenitude without a diminishing *preposition* before it: *Plenitudinem*, properly speaking, it will not be; *de plenitudine*, that's the proper speech, somewhat taken from fulness, a kind of *ablative* secondary, proportional one. We are not *capable* of other, somewhat taken off the height, somewhat bated of the *perfection* of it. With this fulness it was, that the blessed *Virgin*, the *Protomartyr* St. Stephen, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. Barnabas, and other Saints are said in holy Scripture to be full or fill'd, full of Grace, or full of Faith, or full of the Holy Ghost, full as the *Bucket*, not as the *Spring*; full as the *Streams*, not as the *Ocean*; full as the *measure*, not as the *immeasurable*; full with a fulness of abundance, not of redundancy; of sufficiency, not of efficiency; full enough for our selves, but not for others: Alas poor narrow shallow things that we are, we cannot hold enough for our selves and others too.

Take from the *Bucket* or the *Stream*, and the *Bucket* will not be full, and the *Stream* will want of what it had. *Lest there be not enough for us and you*, was more then a just fear of the wise *Virgins*: there is not, will not, cannot be enough. No man is sanctified by anothers Grace, no man justified by anothers Faith: the Fathers goodness will not satisfy for the Sons ungraciousness, nor the Mothers Piety for the Daughters Vanity; their Righteousness be it as full as it can, will but suffice only for themselves; 'tis only *Christs* Fulness, his Grace, his Righteousness, that can communicate it self, that we can take any thing from to fill up our own. Sufficient I think this, to read us a *second* lesson of humility, not to think too much of our own Righteousness, nor to pride our selves in our receipts; for of another they are, but from them no other; they are received of *his*, but none receive of *ours*.

Sufficient 2. this too to teach us, not to trust to the Piety of our Forefathers, as if their fulness of good works should excuse our emptiness. They had but *their* share, what would serve their *turns*, we must afresh to the *Spring-head*, to have enough to serve *ours*. And the comfort is in the next point, that it will cost us nothing, we have it *gratis*, for *gratia* it is, of free grace and favour that we receive it.

3. That we may not doubt it, 'tis doubled in the *Text*, redoubled; grace, all *meerly* grace, nothing but grace, *from* it, and *for* it, and *by* it. Nothing from desert, nothing from works; for *if of works, not of grace*, says St. Paul, *Rom. 11. 6.* that's plain; for *if of desert, not of grace*, but duty: not bought or purchased neither, *freely without money*, says the *Prophet*, *Isa. 55. 1.* Come drink, and eat, and fill your selves. The *Ocean* runs not freer than *his* grace. *who hath first given unto him*, says the *Apostle*, *Rom. 11. 35.* Who first? why nobody sure, for before there was any body, before the *foundation of the world*, *Ephes. 1. 4.* he begun with us; even then *gratificavit nos*, he accepted us; all grace from the beginning.

Hence too is a lesson of humility, the *Text* and *day* is full of it, from one end of the *Text* to the other, one end of the *day* to the other: *grace, grace*, to put down all opinion of merit or desert; as if it meant to teach us to be fill'd with humility from the fulness of it *this* day shewed by

Christ.

Christ, and to be read from *all* the *Texts* that concern it; as if *grace* it *self* had this day appeared to teach it.

4. So much perhaps to be prest the rather from the fulness of the *grace* that now follows to be considered in the next particular, lest by the abundance of it we should be *exalted above measure*, as *St. Paul* by the abundance of his Revelations, 2 *Cor.* xii. 7. For men may be proud of graces, and here are store received in the Text.

1. *Gratiam pro gratiâ*, the *grace* of the *Gospel* for the *grace* of the *Law*, that's the more abundant, says *St. Paul*, *Rom.* v. 17, 20. though this was a *grace* too, a favour when time was, and that such, he shewed no such *grace* to any people, as to the *Jew*. To them the *Adoption*, the *Glory*, the *Covenants*, the *giving of the Law*, the *Service of God*, the *Promises*, the *Fathers*, the *coming of Christ also according to the flesh*; all these graces appertained, *Rom.* ix. 4, 5. these all were great ones, but the *Law brought nothing to perfection*, *Heb.* vii. 19. The very end of it was *Christ*, *Rom.* x. 4. The *Law*, as great a favour as it was, was but the *Law* still; full of shadows and imperfections, full of rigours without ability to perform them: That came by *Christ*, the very *grace* and beauty, and glory of the *Law*. was *Christ*, the *grace* of the *Gospel*, that was it which was the *perfection* of the *Law*, the *fulness* of the *Adoption*, the *performance* of the *Covenants*, the *finishing*, *bringing in a better service*, the *fulfilling* of the *promises*, the *expectation* of the *Fathers*, the *fulness* of *Christ*, not according to the weakness of the *flesh*, but according to the power of the *Spirit*, and of an endless *grace*. This is *de plenitudine* right, over and above all graces and favours that were shewed before, all that ever any received before us.

So much above them, as spiritual and eternal blessings are above the temporal, as the reward of glory is above all other rewards; for *grace* for *grace* 2. is *grace* for *glory*: *grace* given us by *Christ*, to the end we may obtain eternal glory by it; all the graces (*If I may so call the good works of the Law*) tended only to temporal promises; read the whole *Law* over, and shew me any other if you can; the *grace* of the *Gospel* of *Christ* it is, that first revealed the hopes of glory, thence the *Kingdom of Heaven* is heard of first, there first of *grace* for glory, *grace* was single *grace*, till *Christ* took a second nature to double it, to *grace* all to us.

And 3. here's glory again for *grace*, according to other *Interpreters*; the reward as sure as the work is: *Grace* is not only given us to purchase *Glory*, but *Glory* as surely given us for that *Grace*. The glory of the *Law*, or the works of the *Law* had no *grace* at all, was but a kind of dark dusky thing: The glory of the *Gospel*, and the glory after it, and from it, is that only that exceeds in glory. Thus *Grace* is doubled upon *Grace*; we have *Grace* for *Glory*; *Grace* to come to *Glory*, and *Glory* again to reward our *Grace*: two great ingredients of the fulness we receive, & *gratiam pro gratiâ*, even each of these for the other.

Yet to make the *Glory* yet more glorious, the *Grace* more gracious, here is 4. *Grace* for *Grace*; yet in another sense, one *Grace* for another, one to advance another; *Grace* upon *Grace*, that we may have *Glory* upon *Glory*. For *Christ* will fill us, if we will, with more than a simple *Grace* or *Glory*, increase and advance us by degrees in both. *Grace* for *Grace* is put to signify abundance of *Graces*: as *Job* ii. 4. *Skin for skin*, skin after skin, one thing after another will a man give for his life; *Grace* for *Grace*, that is *Grace* after *Grace* will *God* give us, one after another: never leave giving, will not only give us one or two simple graces, but a confluence and full tide of them; one crowding upon the other, *gratiam*

cumulatam, Graces upon heaps, all *spiritual blessings*, Eph. i. 3. *redemption*, forgiveness of sins, ver. 7. *the knowledge of the mystery of his will*, ver. 9. *the Seal of the Spirit*, ver. 13. all the gifts and graces of the Spirit, all holy Vertues and Accomplishments, all sanctifying and edifying Graces, for to procure us Grace in the eyes of God, and Graces to gain us Grace in the eyes of men: Grace to make our selves gracious in the sight of God, and Grace to make others gracious also, to bring others into Grace, into the Grace of the Gospel. Thus also we receive, and this *And* here hath an *emphasis*, and 'tis this, to denote this fulness and abundance of Grace, that especially, whatever else.

Yet this *And* may be an *adversative*, as much as *sed*, or *quamvis*; per-adventure thus we receive, and Grace we receive, and Grace in this abundance, but not all Grace alike, but Grace for Grace; that is, either according to his Grace wherewith he loves us, some more, some less, one this, another that, according to the *measure of the gift of Christ*, Ephes. iv. 7. Or 2. Grace for Grace, according to the measure of the use we make of one Grace, we receive another. *He that hath, to him shall be given*, St. Mat. xiii. 12. Or 3. Grace for Grace, that is one after this manner, another after that, 1 Cor. vii. 7. One receives one Grace, another receives another, not all alike, not all the same. *To one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another Faith*, &c. 1 Cor. xii. 8. and so onward: and which adds much to the fulness of this Grace, it reaches now fifthly unto all, *we all have received*.

5. *All* is a large word, yet no larger then *Christ's Grace*. *Ho every one*, cries the Prophet, every one come take it, Isa. lv. 1. he disgraces *Christ's Grace*, nay ungraces it, that ties it up only to I know not what elect ones. *All things were made by him*, ver. 3. and received they nothing by it? He fills all things living with plenteousness, Psal. cxlv. 16. and receive they nothing? He enlightens every man that comes into the world, ver. 9. and is that nothing neither? 1. Does he that receives light from *Christ*, receive nothing? Yes, yes, all receive some benefit or other from *Christ's* coming; It were to deny his fulness, to deny that.

All the Patriarchs that went before, all drank of the same Rock, which Rock was *Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 4. they received their fill of him, according to the capacity of their Vessels. All the Prophets that followed after, they also were partakers of the same Grace, in another manner. But they that followed him, they, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, they above all received and Grace for Grace. Nay, I am perswaded, that there was no man, no creature; there is no man, no creature (*the Devils only excepted*) but receive some benefit or other from this fulness; the goodness of God which is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and to everlasting life, 2 S. Pet. iii. 9. would not suffer any to perish for want of receiving that without which they could not but perish, that first Grace which might in some measure dispose him for a second, and so forward, were he but willing to work with it.

Nay, even *we*, and what were *we*? We that were his enemies, St. Paul tells us, we receive reconciliation by his Grace; and why not any enemies as well as *we*? We that were haters of God, Rom. i. 30. and hateful to men, Tit. iii. 3. We that were dead in trespasses and sins, Ephes. ii. 1. full of all abominable iniquities; we received pardon of them all, and were received to Grace: and what reason have we then to exclude any, who be they what they will, cannot be worse than we were once, nor in less capacity to receive it: To be sure, *omnes* will reach them all, and God is gracious

gracious to all, not only to them that call upon him, but to them also that never seek him, nor call upon him, Isa. lxxv. 1. This is Grace indeed, and 'tis that makes up the fulness, that shews it full.

6. 'Tis time we should know to whom we owe it: look we back again once more to the *ejus*, and you have it. Of his fulness, that is, of *Christ's*, it is that we thus all receive; that we receive all this, *Ephes. i. 6.* In the beloved it is, that we are thus gratified, thus grac'd, thus begrac'd. And the beloved is he in whom he was well-pleased with us all, *S. Mat. iii. 17.* Grace and Truth, why? that's true Grace, and that came by *Jesus Christ*, in the verse next the Text. we were all ungracious Children; he the only gracious Son, who makes us gracious. In him he chose us, *Ephes. i. 4.* In him he predestinated us to the adoption of Children, *ver. 5.* In him he hath made us accepted, *ver. 6.* In him we have redemption, forgiveness, and the very riches of grace, *ver. 7.* All in him, and without him nothing. So get him, and get all; lose him, and lose all. *Acts iv. 12.* There is no other name but his, no other Grace but his, by which we can be saved. From the Grace he had with his Father from the beginning, we have ours in time, from the Grace he hath purchased with him, to which he was exalted by his obedience, *Phil. ii. 9.* we are also exalted to his Grace. From the Grace wherewith he loved us, are we made partakers of his Grace. He design'd it for us, he he deserv'd it for us, he infuses it into us, he works it in us, and after all he has yet reserved a greater for us, an eternal Glory for the reward of Grace.

7. How can we now then, lastly, but render Grace for Grace? say grace, and blefs him over this plenty and fulness; cry Grace, Grace unto it, as the Prophet has it, *Zach. iv. 7.* proclaim, and tell it to the world, fill our lips with Songs and Hymns of Praise, fill the Congregations with his Glory, and the world with telling out his goodness.

To do it the better, to do the greater right to his Grace, let us take the Grace-cup in our hand and do it: the Cup which *Christ* blessed, and gave to us to remember him, and his Grace in. We call it a receiving, let us then receive it, receive, and answer this receiving in the Text, with the receiving in the day; receive we him and his fulness, him and his graces, him with all thankfulness, reverence, and devotion. Set we our selves to do it, to draw waters out of these wells of salvation, *Isa. xii. 3.* by the hand of Faith, and bucket of Humility, out of these Fountains of our Saviour: So the Latin reads it, whose side runs out blood and water, full streams of grace and pardon, and all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, if we will but come hither to draw or drink them. We call it a receiving, and so it is, the most signal receiving, that we have, a receiving him full and whole, Body and Blood, Flesh and Spirit, really, though not corporally both; let us therefore receive it: Open we but our mouths wide, and he will fill them; open we our mouths to beg, and we shall receive; open them wide and full, and we shall be fill'd with fulness too, to day at this full table, a table at this time full of all heavenly delicacies and dainties.

Yet as we must open our mouths, so we must open our hands too, our mouths to receive, our hands to give. We receive of *Christ*, 'tis fit we give somewhat out of our receipts; we receive of his fulness, 'tis but proportionable, that we give out of our fulness to those that are not full, that our abundance may be the supply of others want, as *Christ's* fulness is of ours: 'Tis a day of fulness, and all would be full, the poor as well as the rich, that all mouths might this day be filled with his praise, *1 Cor. xi. 20.* This is not to eat the Lords Body, for one to be full, (*I give it the easiest word*) another to be hungry, the poor must have their share; they that have

have not, says the *Apostle*, that is the poor. 'Tis a *Communion*, and all must communicate, one way or other, *poor* and all. 'Tis a feast of fulness both in the *Church* and in the *House*, all must communicate of *this* days fulness one way or other, in one sort or other; and surely when we have filled our selves with the fulness of *this* house, we cannot but fill others with the fulness of *ours*.

And yet there is one more *ἀνὴρ χάριτος*, another fulness, to which this grace and fulness leads us, to be filled henceforward with *good works*, to be filled with the fruits of Righteousness, and all the knowledge of *Christ*. For this it is, that this fulness is received, that this grace is received, that this Grace-cup, the cup of Salvation is received, that all gifts and graces are received, that we increase in grace, go on in goodness, proceed in all kinds of holy virtues, till we come to the fulness of *Christ*, to the fulness of his grace here, and of his glory hereafter.

Send down thy Grace, O heavenly *Father*, that we may all receive this fulness at thy hand; empty us of our sins, empty us of our selves, that we may henceforward be only fill'd with thee: fill us this day with the plenteousness of thy table, and reject us not, though too unworthy; fill us every day with the plenteousness of thy Grace, and leave us not to our own weakness, that we may go on from grace to grace, from strength to strength, from virtue to virtue, till we come to be filled with the plenteousness of thy house, to the fulness of joy, and pleasure, and grace, and glory for evermore. *Amen.*

Now to the God and Author of all this fulness, all our receipts, all good gifts and graces; to the Father that gives, to the Son that purchas'd, to the Holy Ghost that conveys them to us, be all the fulness of thanks, and praise, and honour, and glory, for ever and ever.

THE

THE FOURTH SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

1 TIMOTHY i. 15.

This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save Sinners, of whom I am chief.



His is a faithful saying. And this is the *day* that made it so, faithful and true, wherein it could first be truly said, that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*: for which both *Text* and *Day* are well worthy of acceptation.

Turn the whole Scripture over, you will find no saying there more faithful, that speaks God more faithful, more to have kept his promise, than *this* that tells us that Christ Jesus is come into the world. *He* in whom all his promises are fulfilled. And run through the year you will find no day more faithful than this that presents us the ground of all our Faith, *Christ Jesus come to save sinners.*

Worthy of all acceptation, too, they must needs be both, both *Text* and *Day*, that brings salvation: above all to sinners (of which ye are a part, and the Preacher chief.) I cannot but with gladness preach it, nor you but with joy and attention hear it: especially to day, the *day* he came in; in a *time* accepted, in the *day* of salvation, when *Text* and *time* so happily meet. The *day* makes the *Text* seasonable. The business of the *Text* makes the *Day* acceptable. The necessities of poor sinners make both comfortable. God make the Sermon profitable too, and we have all we can desire to day.

The *Text* to be sure promises fair: and St. *Paul* himself finds so much comfort in it by his own experience, of the truth and sweetness of it in the former verses 12, 13. that he here commends it to us, as a saying worthy all the respect that we can give it, worthy to be preach'd, worthy to be believed, worthy to be laid hold on, worthy to be laid up faithfully and remembred, *That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* After which saying, nor he nor we have any more to say then that we are the chief of them, so particularly to apply it. [And that I hope we will to day.

For the whole end both of the saying it self, and S. Paul's saying it, is but to dispose and move us worthily to accept Christ now he is come (for whose coming the Church and we have been this month preparing.) And the sum of it to put us 1. in comfort, first that how sadly soever things look'd with us before his coming, by his coming now we may be sav'd, for *Christ Jesus came to save sinners*, and to put us secondly in the way how we may; by believing, 1. this faithful saying for a truth: by accepting it 2. for a word worthy all acceptance; by confessing lastly our selves the most unworthy of it, yet the chief that need it.

Thus you have the full sense of the Text, and both the *Doctrine* and *Use* of *Christmas* in it.

The *Doctrine*, that *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*; the *Doctrine of Christmas*.

The *Use* of it, to take it every one of us to himself; take himself to be the *quorum primus*, the chief of the *quorum* concerned in it, the chief of sinners; and therefore chiefly interess'd in Christs coming.

This the *Use* both of the *Doctrine* and the *Day*, to apply them both, and cry out every one of us with St. Paul, 'Tis I, and I, and I, for whom He came.

In the *Doctrine* there are these particulars.

1. That *Christ Jesus came into the world*.
2. That *He came to save sinners*.
3. That *He came to save the chiefest of them*, the very *quorum primi* of them. What is it else to S. Paul or us? or why does he bring himself in upon no better title?
4. That *all these are faithful sayings, and worthy of acceptance*; all single, such; but all together make up a saying *worthy all acceptance*: the very *ὁ λόγος*, the saying above all sayings, the whole *Word* and *Gospel* it self; the *Word* after which no word can be said: nothing beyond it.

Of which therefore surely the *Use* 2. must needs be great if we thoroughly apply it: and four ways there are to do it in the *Text*, four *Uses* we are to make of it.

1. If a saying, a *faithful saying* it be, we then faithfully *to believe it*.
2. If *worthy acceptance*, we then worthily *to accept it*.
3. If it reach the *chief sinners* too, our chief business then, with St. Paul, humbly to apply it to our own particular; not think much any of us to say, *quorum ego primus*; not to stick to confess our selves the chiefest among them that are sinners, so we may be found chief, or second, or any one among them that are saved.
4. 'Ο λόγος it is, a special *saying* this is, not to be wrapt up in silence then, nor hudled up within private walls, but to be spoken, and spoken out, cried and proclaimed to all the world.

And all this lastly I add to be done to *day*. That indeed is not in the *Text*, but 'tis in the *Time*, and never better to be done then now to *day*: That's the right use of this *Holy time*, that to which the *Church* designs *Christmas*: to proclaim *Christs coming into the world to save sinners*, and to call them in all to come to him.

To carry on the design, I go on now with the *Text*, and begin with the first branch of the *Doctrine* there, that *Christ Jesus came into the world*.

I. That *he did so this great day is witness*, worthy therefore to be kept forever for a witness of it; and they that keep it not, to be suspected that they do not think he did, nor believe that there was any such matter.

Yet

Yet that such a one there was, *one Jesus that went about doing good*, the Jews his rankest enemies will not deny it.

That that *Jesus was the Christ*, though the *Jews* will not, the *Samaritans* will confess it, S. *John* iv. 43. Christ and Jesus too, *the Christ*, *the Saviour* of the world; nay, the *Christ* indeed, and the *Saviour* indeed, and they know it, they say there. Nay of the *Jews* too, many believed it, S. *John* vii. 31. believed and justified it.

Nor did they it without good ground; the many *Miracles* that he did in the confirmation of it; the performing what was prophesied of the *Messiah*, Isa. xxxv. 6. and lxi. 1. The opening the eyes of the blind, the making the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the cleansing the Lepers, the raising the dead, the preaching to the poor the Gospel of peace, those pure and holy, and comfortable Doctrines that he taught; were a sufficient resolution to S. *John Baptists* question: that it was *He that should come*, and we should look for no other, S. *Mat.* xi. 3, 4, 5. no other than He.

Indeed we need not: for this *Jesus* is a *Jesus* of another sort, of another manner of spelling ('tis observ'd) then all former *Jesus's*, then *Jesus* the Son of *Nan*, or *Jesus* the Son of *Josedec*, or *Jesus* the Son of *Syrach*; this *Fehoscuah*, *Jesus* or a *Fehoscuah* (for 'tis so in the Hebrew) is with the points of *Jehovah* in it, a *Fehovah*, *Jesus*, a *Saviour* that is the *Lord*, as the *Angel* tells us, St. *Luke* ii. 11. A *Jesus* never the like before, a *Jesus* above every *Jesus*, a name now above every name, a name to which *Heaven*, and *Earth*, and *Hell* must bow: never did they to any *Jesus* else.

And as this name now above every name, so this coming of his above every coming. We sometimes call our own births, I confess, a coming into the world; but properly, none ever came into the world but he: For 1. He only truly can be said to come who is before he comes, so were not we; only he so. 2. He only strictly comes who comes willingly; our crying and struggling at our entrance into the world, shews how unwillingly we come into it. He alone it is that sings out, *Lo, I come*, Psal. xl. 3. He only properly comes, who comes from some place or other: Alas! we had none to come from but the womb of nothing. He only had a place to be in before he came. Now such a *Jesus* as this, as has God in his name, and must be conceived to be also so by the way of his coming, may well be the *Messiah* that should come into the world, *Jesus the Christ*. We need seek no further, especially if it be the *Jesus* that comes to save sinners. And he it is says our next particular.

2. Nay the *Angel* said so before he was born. He had the name given him for the purpose, S. *Mat.* i. 21. *Thou shalt call his name Jesus*: for why? *For he shall save his people from their sins*. Himself professes he came for the purpose, to call sinners to repentance, S. *Luke* v. 32. and that's to save them; yea so for them, that there's a *non veni* to others; he came for no other: to speak truth, there were no other to come for. *Omnes aberraverunt*, *We were all sinners*: So if he came for the best of us, he yet came for sinners; for them or no body. But so, for such, as not for them that were not such; so altogether for sinners, as not at all for the righteous. *I came not to call the righteous*, not them, but sinners as it were in opposition to them. Indeed, *Opus non habent*, they had no need of his coming. *The whole need not the Physician*, S. *Mat.* ix. 12. but they that are sick, and they are sinners. In a word, not only so for sinners, as before the righteous, and as it were against the righteous, but so for sinners too; as for the worst first, for the greatest of them above the least, the *quorum primi* to be the *primi*, the chiefest

sinners he chiefly came for : that's the third Point of this great Doctrine of the *Text*.

3. Look the company he keeps, you'll say so. *Publicans and Sinners* (the most *emphatical* of the name) there you find him, so often; that he is accused for it by the righteous, the *Scribe* and *Pharisee*, *S. Mark* ii. 16. So for the most enormous sinners it seems, that the righteous cannot bear it; they are scandalized at it. One would think they were so still, that are so much against Christs saving any body but themselves, that they will allow him neither to save, nor come to save any body but the *Elect*. True indeed he saves none but the *Elect*, that is, he saves none but them that are and shall be sav'd; but he came to save even them too that shall not be saved. *Not for our sins only*, says *S. John* expressly, *but for the sins of the whole world*, *S. John* ii. 2. The whole world, be it as large as it will, and the sins of it, be they as great as they can, and all the sins of the world indefinitely, be they whose they will in it; for wicked *Manasses* his as well as good *Hezekiah's*; for *Noahs* Drunkenness, *Lots* Incest, *Dauids* Adultery, *Solomons* Idolatry, *S. Peters* Apostacy, *S. Pauls* persecuting and blaspheming, for all sorts of sins and sinners. So they be Saints say they, though they be of the world says He, *He is a propitiation* for them all, *would have all men sav'd*, says *S. Paul*, *1 Tim.* ii. 4. even them that *deny him*. When he has *bought them*, says *S. Peter*, *2 S. Pet.* ii. 1. 'Tis neither a true nor faithful saying, nor much worth the accepting, as many receivers as it has, that says otherwise, that binds up his coming only to the *Elect*. For if not for all, *they* may be out for all their brags, may be too righteous to be in, among the sinners; among the righteous, that he says himself he came not for. This saying that we are for, *That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*, is a faithful saying, worthy all acceptation, even the chiefest the world affords, to be received by all, whilst it self rejects none. And that it is so we are now to shew you in all particulars: That 'tis a faithful saying; first, That word has many senses, and this saying is faithful in them all, in all those senses, in all its parts.

1. *Pius* is *certus & indubitatus*, and a faithful saying, is 1. a certain and undoubted truth. Christs coming is no less, We know it, says *S. John*; know that the Son of God is come, even his Son *Jesus Christ*, *1 S. John* v. 20. *Come*, and *come in the flesh*, *1 S. John* iv. 3. that's sure enough into the world; and none but the *spirit of Antichrist*, says he, none but *Hereticks* will deny it. An *Angel* this day proclaimed it; a whole *Choir* came this day down to celebrate it, the *Wise men* a while after came from the ends the earth to see it. Nothing but what *we have seen with our eyes*, *which we have looked upon*, and *our hands have handled*, do we declare in it, says *S. John*, *1 S. John* i. 1. The whole Land of *Judea* daily saw it, millions have died for the truth of it, and the whole world is witness of it.

And 'tis certain, he came for sinners, *to seek and save them*, *S. Luke* xix. 10. keep them from being lost, came and went for them, came into the world, and went out of it, died to save them, *whilst we were yet sinners* he did so, *Rom.* v. 8. gave commission besides, that when he was gone remission should be preach'd to sinners all the world over in his name, *S. Luke* xxiv. 47.

This takes in the chiefest, makes that certain too, that he excludes none; for *to save the world he came*, says he that lay in his bosom, and knew his heart, to save and not to judge it. That comes but *ex eventu*, when men will not be sav'd. To judge or condemn them was not his business, unless they were such as would not be sav'd; and are there any so great sinners as would not?

2. And

2. And all this is not only true and faithful, or certain in it self, but makes 2. all Gods former sayings to be so too. It fulfils the Promises, it perfects the Sacrifices, it answers the Types, it compleats all the Prophecies that went before: all was shadow till this substance came; all their good and happiness was but coming till *Jesus came*; all was but say and say, meer words, till this eternal word leapt down from Heaven. This coming of Christ gave faith and credit to them all. Now *God is* fully prov'd to be *faithful*, and all his Promises and Prophecies full and true. Now *Jacob's Shiloh*, *Isaiah's Immanuel*, *Feremiah's Branch*, *Daniels Messiah*, *Zachariah's Day-spring*, *Haggai's desire of all Nations* is come into the world, and all the Sacrifices of Bulls, and Rams, and Lambs, and Goats recapitulated in this *Holy Lamb*; and all the Types from the beginning of the world compleated in this great *antitype to day* beginning to appear, in the *end of the world*, as the *Apostle* speaks, *to put away sin*, Heb. ix. 26.

Ay, that's the business that makes this *saying* yet more *faithful* in the way we are now speaking of; this putting away sin, or saving sinners. This *Lo I come* puts an end and period to all Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices for sin, *Psal. xl.* No more of them to be heard of when this true Sacrifice is once brought into the world: All the old Prophecies end here too. For to bear our iniquities, to make his soul an offering for sin, to make intercession for the transgressors, comes this righteous Servant, as the Prophet *Isaiah* styles him, *Isa. lxiii. 10, 11, 12.* And, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, comes *Daniels Messiah*, *Dan. ix. 24.* And now he is come, they all are at an end, their words made good, and all is true, all faithful and true. And if iniquity, transgressions, and sins be enough to take in all sorts of sinners (as no doubt it is) his coming to save the chiefest of them, does but the more fulfil the truth of all.

3. But the words are *faithful* 3. in another sense, not the fulfilling only of our Fore-fathers Faith, but the full of ours. For to believe *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*, is to believe all we are obliged to believe, either of God, or Christ, or of our selves.

In the word *Christ* is the whole *Trinity*, his own Person and Offices compris'd; in *Jesus* and his *coming* both his Natures: in *sinners* is our own. And in his coming into the world *to save* them, is the whole work and business of our Redemption. Will you see them how they rise?

Why? to be *Christ* is *to be anointed*, and *to be anointed* supposes as well him that does anoint, which *S. Peter* says, was *God the Father*, *Acts iv. 27.* the first Person, and that with which he is anointed, which the same *Apostle* tells us was the *Holy Ghost*, *Acts x. 38.* the third Person, as well as him that is anointed, whom the *second Psalm* makes *God the Son* the second Person. And this anointing too implies all his Offices of *King*, *Priest*, and *Prophet*: they anointed all of them, and he anointed to be them all. Here are all the Persons in the *Trinity*, and therein his own, with all his Offices besides.

2. *Jesus* is his name; that signifies a Saviour, and that speaks him *God*. *Ego sum, & prater me non est*, *Isa. xliii. 11.* None can be truly so but He. But his coming into the world, that shewed us he was man. There's both his natures. And

3. In the title of *Sinners*, there's our own, that tells us what we poor things are: poor wretched sinners that want a Saviour.

Lastly, his *coming into the world* is but a short expression of all he did and suffered in it: and *to save sinners* is to take thence a *Church unto himself*,

to purifie and cleanse them from their sins, to raise them first from the death of Sin here, to the life of Righteousness, to the communion of Saints, and to raise them at last from the death of the Grave unto the life of Glory; yea, the communion of Saints hereafter. This is the sum of the Christian Faith, and 'tis all summ'd up here: all the Articles of the Creed, nay the whole Gospel it self in this one single period; *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*. A saying which is not only *mens* but *mens*, now not only *faithful*, but the full Faith it self.

Faithful it is 4. in another acception. *Fidelis est qui nunquam fallit*, not like those *Aque infideles*, that the Prophet *Jeremiah* complains of, *Jer. xv. 18.* those faithless streams, those shallow brooks that fail and dry away when we most need them. When all other waters fail us, this Fountain that was set open for *Judah*, and *Jerusalem*, *Ezek. xiii. 1.* will run still. When all other comforts are dried up and gone, this of Christ Jesus coming will be coming still: When all other sayings put together will not heal our wounds, nor refresh our weariness, nor cool our heat, nor quench our drowth: this will do all. When all things else desert and leave us, and nor Friends, nor Fortunes, nor Wit, nor Eloquence, nor Strength, nor Policy will help us; this will be faithful to us, this Christ Jesus will stand to us. No such well-spring of life in the world as he, and nothing can come so bad to us in the world, but his coming makes good, a world of good of.

Nay, this very saying, that he *came into the world to save sinners*, and the chiefest not excepted, well laid to, will stick close to us in all distresses, disperse the terrors of our sins, defeat the devices of the Devil to disturb and fright us: this will support us in our weaknesses, sustain us in our faintings, raise us out of our despairs, relieve us in our sicknesses, ease us in our pains, refresh us in our agonies, comfort us on our death-beds, revive us when we are even dead, go with us out of the world, and never leave us till it has brought and laid us at his feet who came to save us; and is not willing that any *should perish*, says *S. Peter ii. 3, 9.* No not the greatest sinner, not any, first or last.

5. Well may this saying 5. pass for *χρηστός* now as *St. Ambrose* and *St. Augustine* seem to have read it, as well as *mens*, be stiled *humanus*, or *jucundus sermo*, a sweet and pleasant saying, as well as *faithful*. Pleasing and joyful news it is to hear that such a person as this speaks of is come among us: for all the while we were without this Christ, we were, says *St. Paul*, *without God*, too, *in the world*, *Ephes. ii. 12.* From his coming only it is, that we can say with *St. Peter*, *Bonum est esse hic*, that 'tis good being here, that the world is worth the staying in. It were not without him; no company worth being with till he came, no pleasure in it till he brought it with him. For this it is that *χρηστός* makes no mistake; the saying may be said pleasant without an error.

Indeed what more pleasant, if to save sinners be his coming? liberty, and health, and life, and salvation are pleasing news; liberty to the Captives, health to the Sick, life to the Dying, salvation to the lost and perishing; and to save sinners is to give all of them to them all. Such a saying to them must needs please them all.

And upon this we must needs allow it lastly to be *faithful* in another sense: *mens* is *fide dignus*, a saying worthy of our faith, worth our believing. All true, and certain, and profitable, nay, and pleasing sayings are not so. No matter whether some of them believed or no. This is a truth

truth of so great concernment, and so truly all, that St. Paul himself, that *great Doctor of the world*, is content, nay *determin'd to know nothing else, nothing but Jesus Christ, and him Crucified*, 1 Cor. ii. 2. *Him crucified is him come into the world to save sinners*: for by his Cross he sav'd them, and upon his Cradle the foot of it was rear'd; and from his coming into a cross and peevish world, he began to be crucified and bear it. All other knowledges are not worth the knowing, all other truths not worth the believing: the Law of *Moses* is but an *ABC* learning to this knowledge. All the *Jewish Kabala*, all the wise sentences of the wisest *Rabbies*, all the wisdom of the Heathen world, of all the world: all that is without Christ Jesus in it, but meer fables, endless genealogies, to no end or purpose all of them but to fill the head with empty notion, and the heart with vexation, and the tongue with strife: all meer *σκύβαλα*, Phil. iii. 8. *Very dross and dung in respect of the knowledge of Christ Jesus coming into the world to save sinners.*

Yet after all this, were there not *ἑν ᾧ πάντες* to them all; were either not the chiefest sinners in, or might not the chiefest of them make a particular application of it to himself; were Christs coming only to a few, and all the rest excluded by some inevitable decree, there would be but a starv'd kind of comfort in it at the best: nor could it well command our faith, seeing it might so command us to believe a lye, and cheat our selves. To make the saying either worth the saying or the believing, it must be applicable to the chiefest sinners, and so 'tis here; and the greatest sinner among us may lay hold upon it.

And now it being a saying so *faithful* and true in it self, faithful both to our Fathers and to us, the fulfilling of their Faith, and the ground of ours, and the sum of it too; a saying that will never fail us in any exigence and distress, but bear up our spirits at every turn, and stick firm to us upon all occasions: a saying so pleasing, so worthy of our Faith, and so close to every one of us: 'tis *worthy* sure lastly of *all acceptation*, all the best entertainment we can give it.

'Tis worthy of it 1. for the Person it brings to us: one that is *fairer then the children of men*, Psal. xlv. worth entertaining.

Worthy 2. for the way it brings him to us, in an humble and familiar way (such was his coming) he comes into the world like other men, that we may the easier approach him, and so the more readily entertain him.

Worthy 3. for the good things it tells us he brings with him, for the salvation he comes with to us: a thing worth accepting.

Worthy 4. for the persons it brings all this good to, or for the extent and fulness of that goodness, that 'tis to sinners, sinners indefinitely and at large, sinners of all sizes, all degrees and latitudes; this certainly worthy all acceptation, by all to be accepted, for all interested in it.

And 5. to be accepted too with all acceptance, all the best ways we can imagine, with soul and body, with hand and heart, with all the expressions of love, and reverence, and joy, and thankfulness; love of his Beauty, reverence to his Humility, joy in his Salvation, and thankfulness for the freeness and fulness of it. If a friend come but a long Journey to us, we give him all the welcome we can make, and think nothing enough. This friend came to us *as far as Heaven is from us, farther then all the corners of the earth*. If a great person come to visit

us, we meet him with all the respect and reverence we can contrive: none too much. This is the greatest person can come to us. If there come one to save to when we are now ready to perish, how do our hearts leap, and our spirits dance for joy? how glad are we? nothing can be more. Here's one comes to do it, and to do it to the utmost; that none or nothing of us may be lost: what can we now do to him again, who is, and does all this for us? All we can do is all too little, all expressions too low to receive him with, and this saying that thus assures him to us, worthy to be written in tables of Gold, with pens of Diamonds, to be written however on all our hearts, never to be raz'd out, nor ever to be brought forth but with devotion and reverence, with exultation and joy.

And now I am fallen upon my second general, the use we are to make of this faithful saying, and a four-fold use it will be, to believe, To accept, to apply, to proclaim it: I add, to make this the day to begin it in.

I. *This is a faithful saying*; we are first therefore to believe it: such it is *to them that believe*, to others not: St. Paul I confess says, only to them especially, cap. iv. 10. But that especially is onely too; for Christ is effectually the Saviour of none else. The Saviour truly of all, come down for all, set up for all; yet not any sav'd by him but Believers for all that. Nor all they neither, only such as are *careful to maintain good works*, Tit. iii. 8. This saying not faithful but to Believers; nor any Believers faithful, but such as shew it by good works. Thus St. Paul limits the words, *This is a faithful saying*, in those two last cited places, that we may not cheat our selves out of the Text, or the good things in it.

Indeed if we believe not, yet he *abideth faithful* in himself, he and all his sayings too; that's a *faithful saying* too, 2 Tim. iii. 11. 13. But, nor he, nor any of his sayings faithful to us, whatever in themselves, if we be not faithful and believing, if we distrust either the beginning or end of his coming to us, or by our sins, or foolish scruples, or despairs, thrust our selves out of our interests in any of them. For the second Use we are to make of this saying is, not only to believe it but to accept it.

Use 2. Now to accept it, is very highly to prize and value it: and well we may, 'tis worthy of it. Prize it we then as we do Jewels, as that Merchant in the Gospel did the Pearl, sell all to buy it: there's none to it. Lay it up safe, as we do treasures, that neither Moth corrupt nor Thief steal it from us, nor Sin nor Satan rob us of it: there's no treasure like it. Keep it as we do the Records and Tenures of our Estates, part with it upon no score. Our state in heaven depends upon it; 'Tis our title to it. Lord, where were we without this assurance to save sinners? where all our hopes if this were lost? whereto all our treasures if this were gone? We had need prize and value it, and keep it sure: and this is to accept it.

And yet to give it all acceptation is somewhat more. To accept it as Tertullus tells Felix they did his noble deeds, Acts xxiv. 3. πάντοτε καὶ πανταχῶς καὶ μετὰ πάντων εὐχαριστίας, *always, and every where, and with all thankfulness*.

Do we it then 1. not now and then, not to day only, or one day or two, but every day, every day we rise, every opportunity that presents it self, on every occasion that appears; that's πάντοτε.

Do we it again 2. πανταχῶς in all places, engrave it upon our doors, carve

carve it upon our posts, write it upon our hands, profess it every where we come; not in our Closets and our Chambers only, but in the Church, in the High-Priests Palace, in Pilates Hall, at the Pillar, and at the Cross, no where ashamed or afraid to own it.

Do it 3. *ἡμῶν τὴν εὐχαριστίαν* with all thankfulness. And how is that? by some good deeds sure as well as words. Present we him ever and anon with some good thing or other: now a basket of good Fruits (so St. Paul sometimes styles good works:) Now a bottle of good Wine, the Wine of devout and pious tears: Now with a present of Gold or Silver to adorn his House or his Attendants: Now with a garment to clothe his naked members: Now with a dish to feed his poor and hungry Children: Now with this gift, now with another. This is the way of thankfulness among men, that they call good acceptance among themselves. These and all the ways we can, *πάντα*, (for so some Greek Copies read for *πάντων*) will take all in. But above all *our souls and bodies a living Sacrifice* will be the most acceptable present we can make him. *Rom. xii. 1.* and indeed the fittest for him that came to save them.

This will do well yet 3. St. Paul's *quorum ego primus*, the Apostles applying the only bad word in the Text with an emphasis to himself: his reckoning himself the chief of sinners shews us the best way to apply this faithful saying to our selves, the confessing our selves no ordinary sinners. The third Use of the Doctrine of the Text.

But thou, O blessed Apostle, the chief of sinners! What then (O Lord) are we? *Primo primi*, the chief of chiefs is a stile too little. And yet, can either He or We now say it, and say truth? if not, the lye may rebound peradventure to Gods Glory, but it will work to our own damnation. Best look to that.

'Tis an Hyperbole most think; yet 'tis no handsom hyperbolizing with God, methinks. We may find out a way, I doubt not, so to say it, as yet to say nothing but our own bosom thoughts.

Three things observ'd, we may both say and think we are any of us the chief of sinners. 1. Look we upon our own sins with the severest eye, with all the aggravations of them we can imagine. Look we 2. upon other mens with the most favourable one, with all the extenuations we can invent. And then 3. compare we them so together, and the work is done: we may really suppose our selves of all men the greatest sinners.

To begin with our own sins, and to aggravate them to purpose, consider we them ever in their foulest colours, how base and wretched in themselves, how dishonourable to God, how prejudicial to our Brother, how scandalous to our Religion, and how destructive to our selves. Consider we next upon what poor grounds they were committed, upon what slight temptations, to what silly ends, with what perfect knowledge, with what full deliberation, with what impudent presumption, how wilfully against all good motions, how resolutely against all assistances, and persuasions to the contrary, how desperately against all dangers threatned from them; and how ingratefully to God and Christ. In a word, what a long train of mischiefs they probably draw after them, how many we involve commonly either in the guilt, or in the punishment, or in the example, and thereby lay as it were a seed of wickedness for ever, and so sin even in our worms and dust. Thus we are to look upon our own transgressions.

But 2. When we look upon other mens, we must do that but cursorily

rily and glancing, think they are never so bad as they are represented, not so foul by much as they appear at first; that their intentions perhaps were good, or that it falls out far otherwise than they intended; that what was done was upon mistake or error; that it was but a slip, or weakness, or surreption; that they have not the light, the strength, the grace, the power that God gives us; that they had not the means or opportunity to shun those sins; that they were overpowered by strong temptations, or were merely overtaken, or plainly forced to it and could not help it, or had not the opportunity to do better; that they did it ignorantly, meant no hurt at all, and possibly none may come of it; that what e're it be they are heartily sorry for it; that however they have a thousand vertues and good things in them to overpoise the evils they have done. These are the ways we are to consider the sins of other men.

And then 3. if after this we compare our sins and theirs together, ours under all the circumstances of aggravation, with theirs under all extenuating considerations, our greatest sins with their little ones, our presumptions with their infirmities, our vices with their vertues, our bad or sinister intentions with their good and fair professions, our corrupt natures with their good dispositions, our selves as we are by nature and deprest by sin with them as exalted by any grace and vertue; it will be no marvel, no way strange if we think our selves the greatest sinners.

And indeed we have no reason to do other: we know only our own hearts, those we are sure are wicked; but we cannot say so of other mens, can at the best but suppose theirs; of which in charity we ought always to think the best; ever at least better than our own, especially, when even little and ordinary sins in some, may be often worse than crying sins in others, according to the difference of light and grace, and the variety of circumstances that may attend them. All which considered, if we profess our selves the worst, we shall now need no *hyperbole* to make it good; nor fear it will be any whit worse for us though it be true. St. Paul it seems held it the surest course thus by the greatest and humblest confession of his own unworthiness to plead his interest in this faithful saying, in *Christ Jesus coming into the world to save sinners*.

And now sure 4. we may proclaim it, must do so too. 'Tis not a saying to be kept secret, no mysterious *Cabala* not to be revealed, or committed only to a few. This thing, says St. Paul, was not done in a corner. Into the world he came that came to save us. And, to the world and through the world let it therefore be proclaimed for ever. 'Tis good, says the Angel to old Tobit to keep close the secret of a King, but 'tis honourable to reveal the works of God, Tob. xii. 11.

And to day is a good day to do it in. A day wherein the Lepers said among themselves, 2 Kings vii. 9. *If we hold our peace some mischief will come upon us*. I am sure there was enough upon us, when men upon this day held their peace. Well, tell we now our news as they did theirs, to the Court, to the City, to the Country, to the world. The Church bids us do so to day. Let the Preacher preach it, let the people tell it, let the fingers begin it, and go before, and the Minstrels and Musick follow and answer it to day, that *Christ Jesus is come into the world to save sinners*.

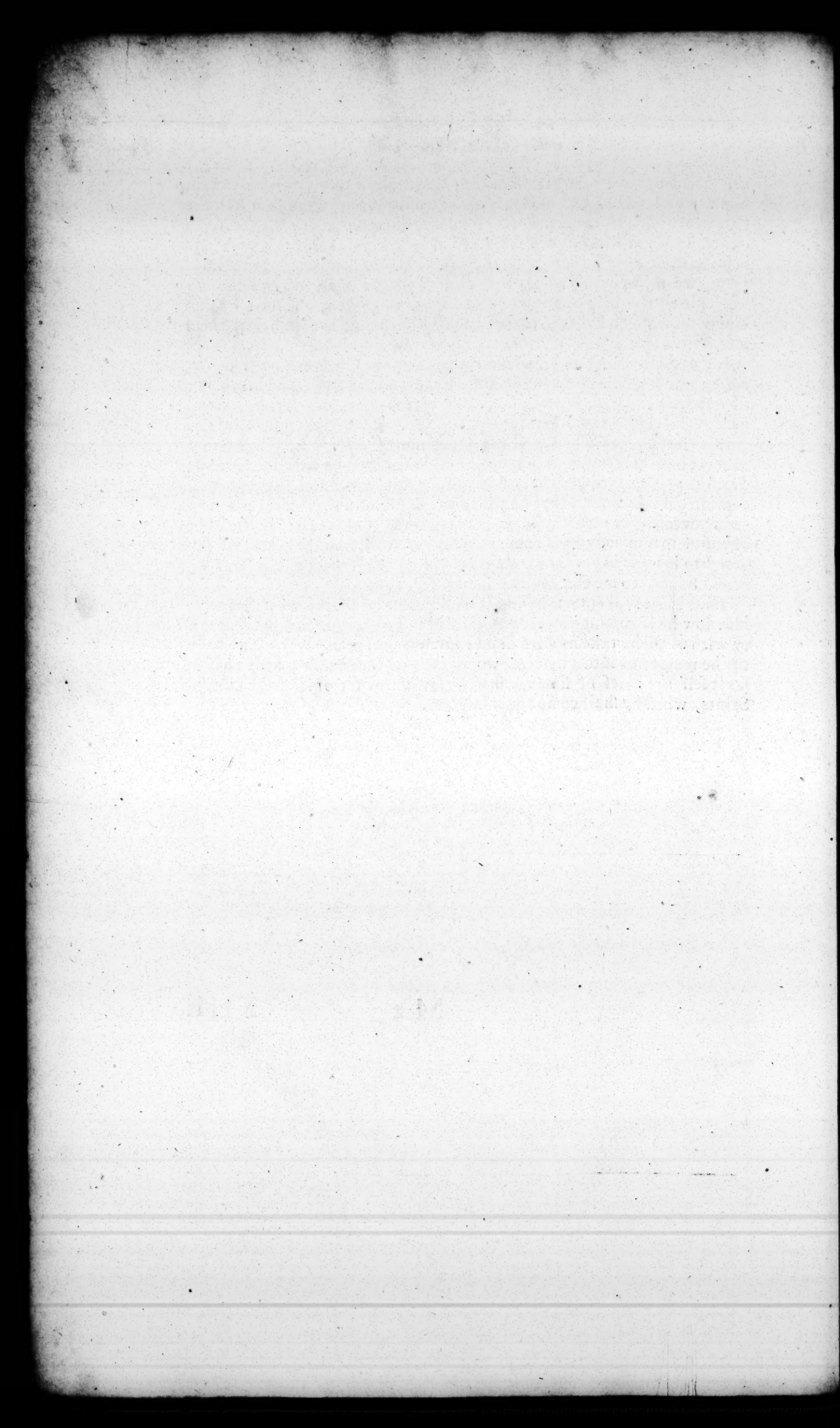
Yet to day we must do more then tell it. We are to believe, to accept, to apply it too. We have to day the best opportunity to do all, to exercise our faith, and to advance it, to give a proof of our acceptance of Christs saving mercies, and the sense of our own sins and miseries.

Yonder under the blessed Elements we shall meet our Saviour coming to us.

us. Shall I tell you how to accept that favour, how receive and entertain him? why! when great Personages are coming to us, we make clean the House, we trick up the Rooms, we set every thing in order, we set forth our choicest Furniture, put on our best Apparel, we look out ever and anon to see if they be coming, and when they are, we go out to meet them, we make our addressees with all humble and lowly reverence, we welcome them with the best words we have, we present them with some lovely present, and take care that nothing unseemly be done before them whilst they stay.

Let us do so to him *that came into the world to day*. Cleanse we our hearts, and purifie our hands, dress up all the rooms, all the powers and faculties of our souls and bodies with graces and vertues, set our affections and passions all in rule and order, put on the garments of righteousness, and true holiness; let us long, and thirst, and hunger after him, let us go out to meet him, accost him with reverence, welcome him with Prayers and Praises, present him with holy vows and resolutions, and so every way demean our selves with that humility and devotion, that care and diligence over all our ways and steps, that nothing appear in us distasteful or offensive to him now he is come: and say we to him in the words of *Elizabeth* to his *Mother*, *whence is this to me that my Lord himself is come unto me, to me a sinner, to me the chief of sinners!*

Thus if we will entertain him when he comes, thus if we will receive him now he is coming towards us, he will not only come unto us, but tarry with us till he take us with him to himself; make us his world to be in till he remove us into a better; where the soul that humbly here confesses it self the chief of sinners, shall be fav'd and set among the chiefest Saints, when he shall come again in glory.



THE FIFTH SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

PSALM xlv. 3. *

* 2.

Thou art fairer then the Children of men, * full of grace are thy lips: * because God hath blessed thee for ever.

* Grace is poured into thy lips.
* therefore.

MY heart is inditing a good matter; * and I could wish my tongue were the pen therefore of a ready writer, that I might speak the things I have made touching the King, this days new-born King, as I ought to speak, as they ought to be spoken. But, *Non mihi si centum lingue sint, oraque centum*, Had I a hundred mouths, and as many tongues, and they the tongues of Angels too, I could not yet sufficiently set forth the Beauty of this Fair one, the Majesty of this King, the grace of his Person, or the comfort of his Day, this day wherein he came to be first reckoned among the children of men.

Yet something must be said both for the days sake, and the persons. 'Tis a day of good tidings, so the Angel tells us, and then we must not hold our peace; the very Lepers that are to hold their hands upon their mouths cannot hold them at this. Say *we do not well*, if we do, *some mischief will come upon us*, 2 Kings vii. 9. And lips so full of grace will require the return of the lips at least. We can do little if we cannot speak again when we are spoken to, when God speaks to us, as the Apostle tells us, by his Son; if we will not render a word in answer to this eternal word, speak of the beauty, and grace, and blessing that we see in him, and find by him. God hath blessed him for ever, blessed us to day, will bless us too, hath already blessed us in blessing him, will bless us more and more in him, too day and for ever: good reason then, we bless him to day, who from this day began to bless us for ever.

All this while you understand me who I mean, who is so fair, so gracious, so blessed. The question is, whether the Psalmist means the same. Indeed they give it out for an *Epithalamium*, or Marriage-Song at Solomons Espousals with Pharaohs Daughter. And in such Songs the praise and commendation

20.th Decr
1810.

* So the Psal. begins, and so the Sermon.

mendation of the *Bridegroom* and the *Bride*, and good wishes to them are the usual subjects. It is so here; *Solomon* and his *Bride* commended, blessed, well-wisht to in it: but yet *behold a greater than Solomon is here*, a fairer, graciouſer, bleſſeder than he; *Chriſt* married to his *Church*, or rather the *Divinity* contracted to the *Humanity*, *Chriſt* made the faireſt of the *children of men*, *ex* as well as *pra*, more gracious words out of his mouth than ever out of *Solomons*, more truly ever bleſſed *an magis*, than he, the *Song* ſung in a fuller key, the words more punctually applicable, the *Prophesie* more exactly fulfilled in him than in *Solomon* himſelf. The *Fathers* have ſo expounded it before us, the *Church* has added authority to it by the choice of the *Pſalms* for a part of the Office of the *Day*: nay, *S. Paul* has ſo applied it, *Heb. i. 8, 9*. So I am no ways ſingular: Indeed I love not to be in ſuch points as theſe, I tread the antient track; though I confeſs I think I can never take occaſions enough, nor I nor any elſe to ſpeak of *Chriſt*, of his beauty, and grace, and bleſſedneſs, either to *day* or any day, though every day whatſoever.

And though I muſt ſay with *St. Hilary*, *Filium mens mea veretur attingere, & trepidat omnis ſermo ſe prodere*. I can neither think without a kind of fear, nor ſpeak without a kind of trembling, of a perſon of that glory; yet becauſe 'tis our eternal *Solomons*, the words wedding-day, and the *Text* part of the wedding-Song; and in ſuch days and Songs the very children, all comers bear a part; and if they did not, the ſtones would do it, (indeed the ſtones and walls ſhould this day all ring of it) and if they, I muſt not be the only ſenſleſs ſtone to hold my peace. Indeed here is a beauty would make any man an *Oratour*: lips that would make the dumb man eloquent, grace would make the moſt ungracious full of good words, and holy language, were they well conceived and conſidered.

That ſo they may, the words are now to be conſidered as a part of an *Epithalamium*, or *Marriage-Song*, wherein *Chriſt* our eternal *Bridegroom* is ſet forth in all his luſtre. Now in a *Bridegroom*, the chief things we look at are good parts, and a good eſtate. Our *Bridegroom* here has both. Fair fac'd, and fair ſpoken, full of grace and beauty for his parts, and a fair eſtate he has too, God be thanked for it; a bleſſed lot, a goodly heritage in a fair ground, bleſſedneſs it ſelf enſtated upon him, and that for ever; both far above the parts and portions of the children of men, the Sons parts above the parts of the children of men, and the *Fathers* bleſſing above the bleſſings of the fathers of men; and neither the one nor the other to be conceal'd, but even ſpoken and ſung of while you will. By us as well as *David*, as loud too, and in as high a key. Run this diviſion upon it if you pleaſe, and take theſe parts, to ſing of in their order.

1. His Beauty, *Chriſts* excellent beauty. *Thou art fairer then the children of men.*
2. His eloquence, *Chriſts* infinite grace in ſpeaking. *Full of grace are thy lips.*
3. The original whence they come, from *Gods* bleſſing; *Eo quod* in one way of rendring, *Becauſe God hath bleſſed thee for ever*: becauſe he hath bleſſed thee, therefore art thou ſo fair, ſo full of grace.
4. The effect of them, what they cauſe. *Gods* bleſſing again: ſo the other rendring the word by *Propterea*; therefore, that is becauſe of this excellent grace and beauty: therefore *has God bleſſed thee for ever.*
5. The end whether they move and tend, the great buſineſs they aim at, even to the bleſſing of *God* again: for ſo the *Hebrew Writers* ſupply

supply the sense, with a *dico ego*. Therefore say I, and so say we; or are to say so, *God hath blessed thee for ever. Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and blessed be our Lord Jesus Christ*, for all this grace, for all this blessing. If our Spouse so fair, then we sure should be faithful: if his lips so full of grace, our lips as full of thanks: if he blessed of God, we again bleis God and him, for so great a blessing: so great blessings, so continually descending upon us; so lasting, so everlasting, never sufficiently answered but by all our ways of blessing; and so blessing him always, all our days, whilst we live, for ever. We to sing our parts, and praise him in the Song, sing or say, *Thou art fairer*, thou O Christ art fairer, &c.

For this is the sum and whole meaning of the *Text*, to give us a view of Christs Beauty, and the Christians Duty both together; so to shew and set forth to us the lustre and splendour of Christs incomparable Beauty, and the overflowing fulness of his Grace, as to make us really in love with him, to ravish our hearts, and tongues, and hands to his Service, and praise, that we may to day, and every day serve, and praise, and magnifie him all the day long, the only way to blessedness for ever. I begin with his Beauty, for that's a principal attractive to him.

When I shall be lift up, I shall draw all men to me, says he himself, S. *John* xii. 32. That lifting up was upon the Crofs, and if that be so attractive, if he be so powerful in his humiliation, when his face is clouded with darkness, his eyes with sadness, his heart with sorrow, when his body is so mangled with wounds, deform'd with stripes, besmear'd with blood, and sweat, and dust, that *will draw all men to him*; how infinitely prevalent then must he needs be when we see him in his excellence, smooth, and even and entire in all the parts of his soul and body. For in both, fair he is, *formosus*, fair, *formosus præ*, very fair, *formosus præ filiis*, fairer then the fairest and sweetest child, in whom commonly is the sweetest beauty; *præ filiis hominum*, than the children of men, when they come to their full strength and manly beauty. By these degrees we shall arrive to the perfection of his beauty; fair he is, very fair, fairer than the sweetest, fairer than the perfectest beauty of the sons of men, so in both his body and his soul.

In his Body first. And fair and comely sure must that Body be which was immediately and miraculously fram'd by the *Holy Ghost*; pure flesh and blood that was stirred together by that pure Spirit, out of the purest Blood and Spirits of the purest *Virgin* of the world. The shadows of that face must needs be beautiful that were drawn by the very finger and shadowing of the *Holy Ghost*: those eyes must needs have *quid sidereum*, as St. *Ferome*, some star-like splendor in them, which were so immediately of the heavenly making. The whole frame of that body must needs be excellent, which was made on purpose by God himself for the supreme excellence to dwell in, to reside in, to be united to, so united by the union *hypostatical*. A body without sin must needs be purely fair, a body without concupiscence must needs be sweet, without defect must needs be lovely; without vacuity must needs be complete, without superfluity must needs be so far handsom, without inordination must needs be perfect, without death must needs be firm, without dust must needs be singular, without corruption must needs be curious and delicate, without any of them must needs be excellent. And all these were Christs body, without sin, without concupiscence, without defect, without vacuity, without superfluity, without inordination, death and dust and corruption could not get the
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least dominion over it; *thou shalt not suffer my flesh to see corruption*, saies the *Psalm*, he did not suffer it to see it saies the Gospel, rais'd incorruptible it quickly was, went down into the grave but staid not there, came not into the dust at all, into any corruption at all; had none all the while it was upon the earth, had none under it.

Fair he was in his conception, conceived in purity, and a fair *Angel* brought the news. Fair (2.) in his Nativity, *señ* is the word in the *Septuagint*, *tempestivus*, in time, that is, all things are beautiful in their time, *Eccl. v. 11.* And in the fulness of time it was that he was born, and a fair star pointed to him. Fair (3.) in his childhood, he grew up in grace and favour. *St. Luke ii. 52.* The Doctors were much taken with him. (4.) Fair in his manhood; had he not been so, says *S. Jerome*, had there not been something admirable in his countenance and presence, some heavenly beauty, *Nunquē secuturi essent Apostoli, &c.* The Apostles and the whole world, (as the Pharisees themselves confels) would not so suddenly have gone after him. Fair (5.) in his Transfiguration, white as the light, or as the snow, his face glittering as the Sun, *S. Mat. xvii. 2.* even to the ravishing the very soul of *S. Peter*, that he knew not what he said, could let his eyes dwell upon that face for ever, and never come down the Mount again. (6.) Fair in his Passion. *Nihil indecorum*, no uncomeliness, in his nakedness; his very wounds, and the bloody prints of the whips and scourges drew an *ecce* from the mouth of *Pilate*, *Behold the man*, the sweetness of his countenance and carriage in the midst of filth and spittle, whips and buffets; his very comeliness upon the Cross, and his giving up the Ghost, made the *Centurion* cry out he was the Son of God; there appeared so sweet a Majesty, so heavenly a lustre in him through that very darkness that encompass'd him. (7.) Fair in his Resurrection; so subtile a beauty, that mortal eyes, even the eyes of his own Disciples, were not able to see or apprehend it, but when he veil'd it for them. (8.) Fair in his Ascension, made his Disciples stand gazing after him so long (as if they never could look long enough upon him) till an *Angel* is sent from Heaven to rebuke them, to look home, *Acts i. 11.*

If you ask *Eusebins*, *Evagrius*, *Nicephorus*, *Damascen*, and some others, how fair he was, they will tell you so fair, that the Painter sent from *Agbarus* King of *Edeffa* to draw his Picture, could not look so stedfastly upon him as to do it, for the rays that darted from his face; and though the Scripture mention no such thing, 'tis no greater wonder to believe then what we read of *Moses* his face, which shone so glorious that the Children of *Israel* could not behold it, *2 Cor. iii. 7.* *Lentulus* the Roman President his Epistle to the Emperour *Antonius*, describes him of very comely colour, shape, and figure; and so do others. Not such a beauty yet as that which darts from it wanton rays, or warms the blood, or stirs the spirits to vain desires, or secular respects and motions; but a sweetness without sensual daintiness, a lustre without lightness, a modest look without dejectedness, a grave countenance without severity, a fair face without fancy, eyes sparkling only heavenly flames, cheeks commanding holy modesty, lips distilling celestial sweetness, beauty without its faults, figure, and proportion, and all such as was most answerable and advantageous to the work he came about, every way fitted to the most perfect operations of the reasonable and immortal soul; the most beautiful then sure when beauty is nothing else but an exact order and proportion of things in relation to their nature and end, both to themselves and to each other.

Take his description from the Spouses own mouth, *Cant. v. 10, 11, 12, &c.* *My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy (or curled) and black as a Raven. His eyes are as the eyes of Doves, by the rivers of water, washed with water and fitly set, [that is, set in fulness, fitly placed, and as a precious stone in the foil of a Ring.] His cheeks are as a bed of Spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like Lillies dropping sweet smelling Myrrhe: his hands are as gold Rings set with Beryl: his belly as bright Ivory over-laid with Saphyrs. His legs are as pillars of Marble, set upon sockets of fine Gold. His countenance like Lebanon, excellent as the Cedars. His mouth is most sweet, yea he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.* This is our beloved too. Solomon indeed has poetically express'd it. Yet something else there is in it besides a poetick phrase. Beautiful he thus supposes he is to be, who was to be this Spouse, have the beauty of all beautiful things in the world conferr'd upon him; at least to have the finest and subtilest part of all worldly beauties, those imperceptible, yet powerful species of them which make them really amiable and attractive; a head, and locks, and eyes, and hands, and feet, quantity, colour, and proportion, such as darted from them not only a resemblance, but the very spirit of heavenly beauty, innocence, purity, strength, and vigour. Poets when they commend beauty, call it divine and heavenly; this of his it was truly so, a kind of sensible Divinity through all his parts.

Shall I give you his colour to make up the beauty? He was white, pure white in his Nativity, ruddy in his Passion, bright and glistering in his life, black in his death, Azure-vein'd in his Resurrection. No wonder now to see the Spouse sit down under his shadow with great delight, *Cant. ii. 3.* we sure our selves now can do less, and yet this is but the shadow of his beauty. The true beauty is the souls, the beauty of the soul, the very soul of beauty; the beauty of the body, but the body, nay the carcase of it. And this of the souls he had (2.) in its prime perfection.

2. Now beauty consists in three particulars; the perfection of the lineaments, the due proportion of them each to other, and the excellency and purity of the colour. They are all compleat in the soul of Christ. The lineaments of the soul are its faculties and powers, the proportion of them is the due subordination of them to God and one another. The colours are the virtues and graces that are in them.

His powers and faculties would not but be compleat, which had nothing of old Adam in them. His understanding without ignorance, he knew all, the very hearts of all, thoughts as they rose, what they thought within themselves, *S. Luke v. 22.* thoughts before they rose, what the Pharisees with other would have done to him, had he committed himself unto them. Now Tyre and Sidon would have repented had they had the mercy allowed to Corazin and Bethsaida, *S. Luke x. 13.* His will without wilfulness or weakness, his passions without infirmity or extravagance, his inferiour powers without defect or maim, his understanding clear, his will holy, his passions sweet, all his powers vigorous. Hear the Wise man describe him under the name of Wisdom, *wisd. xvii. 22, 23, &c.* *In her, that is in him, who is the Wisdom of the Father, is an understanding Spirit, holy, one onely, manifold, subtile, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, stedfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure, and most subtile spirits, and ver. 25, 26. A pure influence flowing from the Glory of the Almighty, the brightness of the ever-*

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lasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness.

The powers of his soul being thus pure, vigorous, and unspotted, they cannot (2.) but be in order; the will following his understanding, the passions subordinate to them both, all the inferiour powers obedient and ready at command and pleasure. He had no sooner exprest a kind of grievance in his sensitive powers at the approach of those strange horrors of his death and sufferings, but presently comes out, *Non mea, sed tua, Not my will but thine*, all in a moment, at peace and in tranquillity. No rash or idle word, no unseemly passage, no fowre look, nor gesture or expression unsuitable to his Divinity throughout his life: the very Devils to their own confusion cannot but confess it, *we know thee, who thou art, the Holy One of God*, S. Mark i. 24.

To this add those heavenly colours and glances of grace, and vertues, and you have his soul compleatly beautiful: Meekness, and Innocence, and Patience, and Obedience even to the death; Mercy, and Goodness, and Piety, and what else is truly called by the name of good, are all in him: insomuch that the *Apostle* tells us the very *fulnesse of the Godhead dwells in him bodily*, Col. ii. 9. No Divine Grace or Vertue wanting in him. In him are all the *treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, ver. 3. In him all sanctity and holiness, not so much as the least *guile in his mouth*, 1 S. Pet. ii. 22. So holy, that he is *made holiness and sanctification unto us*, 1 Cor. i. 30. *Sancti quasi sanguine uncti, we Saints and holy become hallowed by the sprinkling of his blood*. In him lastly is all the power and vertue, *omnis virtus*, that is *omnis potestas, all the power in heaven and earth* fully given to him, S. *Matth.* xxviii. 18.

So that now we shall need to say little of the other particular of this first general point of Christs perfect beauty, that he is not only *Formosus*, but *Formosus prae*, not only *fair*, but *very fair*: for where there is so much as you have heard, exceeding and excellent it must needs be. Where the body is compleat in all its parts, the soul exact in all its powers, the body without any ill inclination natural or habitual, the soul without the least stain of thought, or glance of irregularity, nothing to sully the soul or body, all wisdom, and holiness, and power, and vertue: We can say no less of him then the *Psalmist of Jerusalem*, *Very excellent things are spoken of thee thou City of God*, thou miraculous habitation of the Almighty, thou very dwelling not of God only, but the very Godhead too.

Nor shall I need to say much of the third, the *prae filius*, that his beauty is more sweet and innocent then the new-born babes. Alas the sweetest fairest child comes sullied into the world with *Adams* guilt. Some of that dust that God cast upon him when he told him, *Dust he was, and into dust he should return*, sticks so upon the face and body, the very soul and spirit too of the prettiest infant, that it is nothing to this days child. *In omnibus sine peccato*, Heb. iv. 15. *In all without sin*, says the *Apostle*, the very temptations he suffered were not from the sinfulness of his nature, any original concupiscence; *non novit*, says the *Apostle* in another place, 1 Cor. v. 21. he knew it not, *knew no sin* at all: in this he might use St. *Peters* phrase, *Man I know not what thou meanest*, I know not what this condition of man so much as means. *Præ filius*, he is as much purer then the child we call innocent, as much before it in purity and innocence, as he is in time and being. Nay yet again, though we see the sweetest beauty is commonly that of children whilst they are so, yet even that beauty must needs have some kind of stain, or mole, or some insensible kind of defect,

defect, though we know not what, nor how to term it, which was not in him. The very natural inordination of our powers must needs give a kind of dull shadow to our exactest beauty, and silently speak the inward fault by some outward defect, though we are too dull, being of the same mold, to apprehend it; whilst there could be no such darkneſs in the face of Chriſt, no Genius in it which was not perfectly attractive, and exactly fitted to its place and office.

This perhaps may ſeem a ſubtlety to our duller apprehenſions; but 'tis plain that I ſhall tell you, though but briefly in the fourth particular, that he is *fairer then the children of men*, then men come to their perfect beauty. Alas! alas! before that time long, ſin had ſo ſullied them, that we may read dark lines in all their faces: the *Phyſiognomiſt* will tell you all their faults; our ſins and deformities are by that time written in our foreheads, engraven in our hands; our beauty is almoſt clean loſt into corruption. Could we ſee as Angels do, thoſe eyes that ſeem to ſparkle flames, would look terrible as the fires of Hell. Thoſe cheeks that ſeem beauteous in their bluſhes, would be ſeen to have no other than the colour of our ſins: thoſe lips which we cry up for ſweetneſs, would ſtink in our conceit with rottenneſs: the teeth that look white as Ivory, we ſhould behold black with calumny and ſlander as the ſoot of the fouleſt Chimneys: the fair curled locks, would look like ſnakes, the young ſpawn of the great red Dragon: the hands that look ſo white and delicate, would appear filthy, bloody, and unclean. We, poor we, are but blind moles and bats. We ſee nothing. We know not what is beautiful, what is lovely. If we did, theſe earthly beauties would ſeem what I have ſaid them, nay worſe; Chriſt only would be beautiful, no body but Chriſts body, no body but that wherein Chriſt dwells, in whoſe eyes, and cheeks, and lips, and head, and hands, you might ſee Chriſts Beauty, Meekneſs, Love, Charity, Goodneſs, Juſtice, Mercy, Innocence, Piety, with the reſt of thoſe lines of beauty which were in him. But whatever we would then ſay of the bodies, we can ſay no other even now of the ſouls of men, that none are fair, but that are well colour'd and proportion'd to thoſe heavenly lines, and in this point freely acknowledge the pre-eminence of Chriſt, the prerogative of this Spouſe. And well may we ſay of him with the *Pſalmiſt*, that he is *fairer then the children of men*, whom daily ſins deform and render ugly, when the *Apoſtle* ſets him before the *Sons of God*, the *Angels*, the *Cherubins*, and *Seraphins*, which you will of them; *for to which of them*, ſays he, *has he ſaid at any time; Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?* Heb. i. 5. begotten thee after mine own image, the very expreſs image of my perſon, the *brightneſs of my glory*, ver. 3. *Fairer then the children of men*, no doubt, who is as fair and bright as God, who is higher then all the *Sons of men*, all the people by the head, by the Godhead which is in him. Which being in him, there needs no more to ſay, but that 'tis of neceſſity he muſt be the faireſt of the *Sons of men*, through whoſe eyes, and face, and hands, and whole body, the rays of the Divine Beauty are continually darting from within. Well may we now alſo expect ſome of it at his lips, and ſo we find it here in the very next words, very fully iſſuing there, *Full of grace are thy lips*, that's the ſecond general of the *Text*, *Gratia diffuſa in labiis*, *Grace in the lips* as well as beauty in the forehead, in face or other parts of ſoul and body.

Three degrees we obſerve in the words to make up this fulneſs, *Gratia eſt*, *gratia diffuſa*, *diffuſa in labiis*, that Grace there is in him as well as beauty. (2.) Grace abundant, and in full meaſure. And (3.) ſo abundant,

and so full, that it falls into the lips, comes out full spout there, there above all it issues, and manifests, and appears.

Grace first, that's good with beauty, all beauty but deform'd without it; a good hint to you by the way, to get those souls fill'd with grace, whose bodies God has made fine with beauty. If God has given thee beauty, beg of him that he would also give thee grace, beautifie thy soul as well as body; and strive thou also what thou canst possibly thy self to adorn thy beauty with grace and goodness; or if thou hast little or no beauty in thy body, make amends for it by the beauty and sweetness of thy soul: though thy face be not fair, thy lips may be gracious, thou mayest be full of good words and works, and thou mayest do God more service with the grace of thy lips, than with the beauty of thy fairest face that so amazes and ravishes worldly lovers.

Now a threefold grace there is in Christ. And (1.) *The grace of his person*, or personal grace wherewith his own person was indued, so far as to be free from all kind of sin. The grace of the Head, whereby he disperses his graces into all his Members, as the Head of the Church into the Body, into the souls of Christians and Believers. And then the grace of Union, that ineffable grace whereby the Godhead is united to the Manhood. By the first, he himself is holy, by the second he makes us so. By the third he wrought all the means to do it. For the first, let us reverence his person. For the second, let us embrace him, and be rul'd by him. For the third, let us perpetually admire and adore him.

'Tis ready to conceive now that he was full indeed, beyond measure full; the spirit not given to him by measure, so he says himself, *S. John* iii. 34. and his witness is true, though he bear witness of himself, *St. John* viii. 14. anointed with it above his fellows, as it follows, *ver. 8.* words repeated and applied expressly to him by *St. Paul*, *Heb. i. 9.* So full that he pours out upon us, pours in all we have. We are but empty vessels, till he pour into us; without grace, or any good, till he pour it in, *diffusa in*, as well as *effusa ex*, it is spread abroad in our hearts, says the *Apostle*, *Rom. v. 5.* as well as spread upon his lips.

* Yet is our fulness but the fulness of earthy pitchers, but five or six firkins a piece at most when they are filled to the brim: His fulness the fulness of the fountain, that pours it self over all the neighbouring Vallies, and yet empties not it self, runs still as fresh as ever; only holds when there are no more vessels, or the vessels there will hold no more. His fulness minds us either of our emptiness or shallowness; and if grace, we have either in our hearts or lips, we will deplore it: fill our eyes with tears, and our lips with prayers, that he may fill our hearts with grace, make us some way partakers of his fulness.

And that we need not doubt of, now 'tis gotten into his lips. They are the conduits of his grace, they convey it to us. Three several graces we gather from his lips.

1. His gracious Miracles; by his bare word he heal'd the Lame, and cur'd the Blind, and restor'd the Sick, and cleans'd the Leper, and dispossest the Devils, and rais'd the dead. He spake the word and all was done. Full of grace indeed to do such deeds of grace, so willingly, so readily, so generally, and in the lips indeed, when it was all done only by the word of his mouth.

2. The gracious instructions that proceeded out of his mouth; inso-much that all wondered at it, says *S. Luke* iv. 22. He only taught with authority, and a grace; all other teachers, the long winded *Pharisee* him-

himself, but wind and bubble to him, St. *Matthew*. vii. 29. "

3. The gracious promises of the Gospel, pardon and forgiveness, grace, and mercy, and peace, and heaven, and happiness; all fully preach't and revealed by him. *By the word of his mouth were the heavens made*, says David, made over now to us, kept in store, provided and prepared for us, with that privilege too, *præ filiis hominum, before all the children of men*, that were before us, *that they without us should not be made perfect*, Heb. xi. 40.

We may without question apply *præ filiis hominum* to this point, to say here also that his lips are fuller of grace than the children of men; for even the officers of his enemies were forc'd to confess it long ago, S. *John* vii. 46. *Never any man spake like this man*; never so graciously, never so comfortably, never so effectually, never so powerfully, never so sweetly, never so much grace, and goodness, and glory.

And 'tis still *diffusa*, lasts still. His lips are his Ministers and Preachers, and by them he still diffuses his graces daily to us, *Labia Sacerdotis custodiunt*, Mal. ii. 7. they keep grace for others, even when they keep none for themselves. The ministry of the Word and Sacraments, though it comes sometimes through corrupt and putrid channels, is not defiled or made unprofitable by it. Out of the childrens, that is, ignorant simple Ministers mouths, sometimes God perfects praise, and makes the stony, the most stony and obdurate sinner among them, cry out loud enough to do others good, to soften others, though they continue hard and impenitent themselves.

The *Sacraments* (2.) are his lips too, in which grace is diffus'd, full grace given and poured out upon us, poured in into us. Never grace so fully given as in those holy *Mysteries*; there you see *diffusa* to the eye, the outward pouring out the Wine, and must believe though you do not see the inward pouring out the Spirit. Never so gracious words proceeded out of his mouth as those you hear there. *This is my Body which was given for you. This is my Blood which was shed for you. Take and eat the one, Take and drink the other.* What more abundant grace? what higher favour than thus to have our lips, and mouths, and hearts filled with himself, and all the benefits of himself? Wonder we may at it, for 'tis a work of wonder, an ineffable *mystery*.

Gracious indeed always were his words. *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will refresh you*, S. *Matth*. xi. 28. *I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance*, S. *Matth*. ix. 13. *Fear not little flock, for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you a kingdom*, St. *Luke* xii. 32. *Ye that have followed me in the regeneration, shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel*, S. *Mat*. xix. 28. *God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him should be saved*, S. *John* iii. 17. *Behold I give you power to tread on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you*, S. *Luke* x. 19. *He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax*, S. *Mat*. xii. 20. *Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*, S. *Mat*. xxviii. 20. Great and gracious effusions these, full of grace; yet to give himself daily for our food and nourishment, and call us to it, is to set seal to all those other sayings, to bring them home particularly to every one of us, the very *Amen* and summing up of all the rest.

'Tis time now to enquire whence all this fulness, all this fairness; *Eo quod Deus benedixit*, reads one *Translation*, because God hath blessed him. Christs beauty is Gods blessing, all beauty is so, be it what it will, from him it comes, is but a ray of that eternal beauty, that inaccessible light,
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that *summe pulchrum*, as well as *summe bonum*, the everlasting brightness of the Father: all the beauty of the mind and body, all the integrity and vigour of all our powers, are meerly from his blessing, not our merit; a good lesson from it, not to be proud of any of them. Christ himself as man had not his beauty any other way. No nor his grace neither. His Manhood could not merit the union of the Godhead; it was the meer gift of God so to anoint the Humanity with the Deity, without which he could not have been the Saviour, could not have made satisfaction for so infinite a mass of sins. Gods blessing meerly it was, his meer goodness and blessing so to contrive salvation to us, to enable the Manhood with the Godhead, to go through the work of our Redemption. *God so loved the world, that he sent his Son* into the world, in our mortal nature, thus enabled, thus beautified, thus filled, that we might all be partakers of his fulness.

4. Yet in the fourth place, though Christ as meer man could not deserve this grace and beauty, yet when once the Manhood was united to the Godhead, then he deserv'd the second blessing. Then *propterea, therefore God hath blessed him*, is as true a rendring as the other: then when *being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death*: then comes in St. Paul's therefore or wherefore rightly, *Phil. ii. 8, 9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow*, that we should bow our selves in humility and thankfulness unto him, that every tongue should confess, all tongues bless him, and bless God for him, that we might praise him in the Church, in the midst of the Congregation.

For a double blessing has Christ purchas'd to himself; a blessing upon his Person, and a blessing upon his Church. By his Grace and Beauty he has first purchas'd to himself a name, and then a Church, a glorious one too, *Ephes. v. 27. made himself the head of it. For it pleased God that in him should all fulness dwell*, it pleased him also by that fulness to reconcile all things to himself, to make him the head of all, the Saviour of them all, to bless him in the ordinary stile of Scripture, where children are called the blessing of the Lord, to bless him with an everlasting seed, a Church and people to the end of the world, do the gates of Hell what they can against it.

5. There remains nothing now but our *Benedixit* to answer God's, our blessing to answer his. We to bless him again for all his blessings: For to that purpose is both Christ's grace, and Gods blessing, all his blessings; therefore fulness of grace in him, that it might be diffus'd and poured out upon us; therefore diffus'd and poured out upon us, that we might pour out something for it. *Bene fecit*, for *Benedixit*, some good works or other, at least *Benedixit* for *Benedixit*, good words for it; blessing for blessing.

Indeed 'tis but *Benedixit* here with God, but *dixit & fecit*, he said and it was done: saying and doing are all one with God, should be so with us if we would be like him; our deeds as good as our words, our piety as fair as our pretences, that's the only truly blessing God.

And the likest too to last *in secula*, to hold for ever. Good words and praising God in words, is but the leaves of the tree of blessing; and leaves you know will wither: the stock, and trunk is blessing God in earnest by good works, by expressing the diffusions of this grace in our lives and actions, by imitating and conforming our selves to the beauty of this beloved.

If he be so fair as you have seen it, how can we now but love him? if
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his lips so full of grace, how can we but delight to hear him, to hear his word? If blessed, how can we less then strive to be partakers of his blessing? If for ever, how can we but desire to be ever with him, perpetually attending him? If his beauty was Gods blessing, let us humbly acknowledge ours comes all from him. If the grace of his lips were the blessing of Gods, let us know we are not able of our selves to speak so much as a good word as of our selves. If again he was therefore blessed because he was so beautiful, and so diffus'd his grace, us'd both his beauty and eloquence to bring about the children of men to become the children of God; let us so employ those smaller glimmerings of beauty and gifts of grace we have, to the service and glory of God and his Christ.

We dote much upon worldly beauties, we think, we talk, we dream of them, our minds and affections are ever on them, wholly after them. Why do we not so on Christ, and after him? he is the *fairest of ten thousand*, *Solomon in all his glory* not like him: none of all the Sons of *Adam* comes near him. Why do we not then delight to look upon him, to discourse with him, to talk of him, to be ever with him? What's the reason we do not season our labours, our recreations, our retirements, our discourses with him?

We are easily won with fair words and gracious speeches. Lo here are lips the most eloquent that ever were; why do we not even hang upon them? why do we not with the Spouse in the *Canticles* desire him to kiss us with the kisses of his lips, to communicate his fulness to us? Indeed I can render no cause at all, but that we are so immerst in flesh, and earthly beauties, that we cannot see the true heavenly beauty of Christ, or we do not believe it.

And yet this Jesus is every where to be seen, his Ministers, his Word, his daily Grace preventing, directing, and assisting, preserving and delivering us; the creatures plainly and evidently enough discover him daily to us.

But to *day* we have a fairer discovery and sight of him. This *Jesus* that is so fair, this *Jesus* so full of grace, this *Jesus* so blessed of God for ever, is this *day* presented to us in his Blessed Sacrament: there is he himself in all his beauty, all his fulness. Say we then to him, Come in thou blessed of the Lord, come in, we have made ready and prepared the house for thee and for thy Camels, for thy self and those consecrated elements that carry and convey thee. Get we our vessels ready, and shut the door to us, as the poor Widow did shut out all worldly thoughts and wandering fancies, that he may pour out his oyl, his grace into them, till they be full. And pour we out our souls before him in all devotion and humility, in all praise and thanksgiving. Is not the cup we are to take, the *cup of blessing*, in the *Apostles* stile? take we it then and bless him with it, *taste and see how gracious the Lord is*; see and behold how fair he is, how amiable and lovely, and be ravish'd with his beauty and sweetness, and never think we can be satisfied with it, with seeing, or hearing, or blessing him, but be always doing so for ever.

So shall he make us fair with his beauty, good with his grace, happy with his blessedness, bring us one day to see his face in perfect beauty, and so see his grace poured out into glory, there to bless, and praise, and magnifie him for ever.

THE SIXTH SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

S. LUKE i. 68, 69.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people.

And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.

1818
20th Dec.



IS a Blessed Day, our Blessed Saviours Birth-day; and a blessed Text we have here for it: both a Day and Text to bless him in. A Text top-full of blessings, and a day wherein they came. Blessed Persons, and blessed doings, in the Text. Blessed Persons, the Blessed God, our Blessed Lord, Blessed David, and a Blessed People; for a redeemed people are so. *Blessed are the people that are in such a case.* Blessed doings in it too. God blessing, and man blessing. God visiting, redeeming, saving mightily, saving Israel: And one of Israel in the name of all the rest mightily blessing him for so doing to it. All these blessings as well remembred as came in the day. Never was Text so fraught with blessings: never rose Day so fair with blessings: never saw Israel such a one before: never shall Israel or any people see such a Day again for blessings till we come into the land of blessedness.

All that can be said to dim it, is, that this is not the day that blessed Zachary gave this blessing in; it may be nor was this the day that God gave this blessing neither. Time it self runs upon such uneven wheels, that we are fain to borrow hours and minutes to make up the reckoning of our years and days. 'Tis enough that we count near it; 'twere enough if it were a day only set apart by Holy Church to recount it in, though it were nothing near it, nothing near the day when the Lord God of Israel thus visited and redeemed his people. Our business is not to be exact Chronologers of the days of our salvation, but exact performers of our Duties, our thanksgivings and praises for it.

Good Zachary does it here before this Redemption was fully wrought,

six months before this *Horn* of salvation did appear. If we do it a few days before, or after, it matters not. To bless God for it, that's the business. Only we must be allowed a *day* to do it in either first or last. But the *Church* having pitcht it generally every where much about this time; We take it as we find it, quarrel no more with the *Church* for doing it *now*, then we do with *Zachary* for doing it *then*; when *he* more forestall'd the time, then *we* can possibly mistake it.

Being therefore come hither to day upon that account, the account of blessing God, and having here a day of blessing, and a Text of blessing, we shall divide the words into blessings too.

Gods blessing, and mans blessing; Gods blessing man, and mans blessing God again.

I. Gods blessing hath in it these particulars.

1. His visiting, he hath visited. (2.) His redeeming us, and redeemed. (3.) His saving or raising up a salvation for us. That salvation (4.) no mean or little one, but a mighty salvation: so one of our translations. A salvation (5.) with a horn to hold by, a horn of salvation; so the other, a sure salvation. For us (6.) all of us, the very people to hold by, an universal salvation. A salvation (7.) raised up; an eminent salvation. Rais'd up (8.) in the right house, in the house of *David*, a royal, a glorious salvation. Rais'd up lastly upon a right ground too; *David's* relation to him, his servant *David*, or Gods goodness to his servants: a singular and especial salvation for them above the rest. This is Gods blessing man, the first general with the particulars.

II. Mans blessing God is the second, and *that* has these.

1. An acknowledgment of Gods blessings, and his blessedness, visiting, redeeming, saving, &c. That blessings they are, and *His* they are, *He* visited, *He* redeemed, &c. He therefore blessed for so doing.

2. A particular applying and setting our selves to bless him for them, a *Benedictus*, a Hymn set and begun upon it.

3. A desire that others, even all would do so too, for *every* may have as well *as* *est* after it; *Benedictus* as well *fit* as *est* to follow it (for there is neither here) so may be and is as well, a *wish* that others would, as a *way* that we our selves may bless him by.

This is all mans blessing God, the poor pittances we bless him with; acknowledgments, endeavours, and desires, all that we can give him for all his blessings. A very short return *however* to be given him, such as it is. And to *Day* however, a *Day* set apart to do it in.

For all these blessings either rose upon us with the Sun to day, or are to rise from us ere it rise to morrow. Our *Lords* Nativity being the chief ground both of Gods blessing us, and *our* blessing him. To day it was *he* began to visit, to redeem, to save, to raise up *his* horn and ours. To day then sure we to raise up our voices for it in a *Benedictus*, in Hymns and Praises. All that is in the Text was on his part set on foot as it were to day. No reason in the world but what is on ours should be so too. That it may, I shall first spread Gods blessings here before you, so the better to stir up yours.

I. *Mans* blessing indeed it is that stands first here; yet *Gods* it is that is so. He first blesses before we bless, before *we* either *can*, or can *think* to do it. But you must know it is a day, and a business too, where all things seem out of order at the first. High things made low, and low things high: the first made last, and the last first. *God* made man, and man *God*. The very course of Nature out of order, *quite*. No wonder then that the words

words that tell us it are so too; that our blessing should be set before *Gods*. However, this certainly it must teach us, that the first thing we ought now to think or speak of, is blessing God. Yet the way to do that best, is to understand *His* blessings first; I shall take them in their order: so his Visiting I begin with.

Indeed, there they begin all, *Ἐμὸς ἴδεσθαι*, that's the rise of all *Gods* blessings. His looking down upon us, or looking over us (so the word signifies before it comes to visiting) is the *source* of all his mercies. There is nothing else to cause them, but that loving eye he hath to his poor creatures, the pleasure he takes to look upon them. *That* here brings him down to visit them.

For I must tell you now this *visiting* is a coming down, down from heaven, down from his glory, down from himself; a coming to purpose, and down to purpose, when he came so low as flesh; and a visiting indeed, when he came so near us. He visited in former times but by his *proxies*, by his *Angels*, the ushers of his glory, or by his Prophets, or by a Cloud, or by a Fire. Here it was first he visited in person. *Ἐμὸς ἴδεσθαι* was but a looking down from heaven till now, a looking on us at a distance, (and that was a blessing too, that he would any way look upon such poor worms as *we*) it could not be construed visiting properly till this day came. Now first it is so without a *figure*.

Yet is not good old *Zachary* too quick? Does he not cry out *Ἐμὸς ἴδεσθαι* too soon? our blessed *Saviour* was not yet born; how says he then, the *Lord* hath visited and redeemed his people? Answer we might, the good old man here prophesied ('tis said so just the verse before) and after the manner of Prophets, speaks of things to come as *done* already. But we need not this strain to help us out. *Christ* was already really come down from heaven, had been now three months incarnate, had begun his visit, had beheld the *lowliness* of his handmaid, says his Blessed *Mother*, ver. 48. The Angel had told her twelve weeks since, *Her Lord was with her*, ver. 28. of this Chapter. Blessed *Zachary* understood it then (no less than his Wife *Elizabeth* that proclaimed it, ver. 43.) though he could not speak it. As soon as he could he does, and breaks out into a Song of Praise (that was his prophesying) for this new made *Visit*, this new rais'd *Salvation*.

That word slip't ere I was aware, comes in before the time. But 'tis well it did; you might else perhaps have mistaken visiting for *punishing*: so it went commonliest in Scripture till to *day*. It does not here. This business has alter'd it from its old acception. And yet punishing sometimes is a blessing too. 'Tis a mercy we oft stand in need of to bring us home to God. But it is infinitely a greater, when he comes himself to fetch us home, as now he does. Shall I shew you how great it is?

Why, then (1.) It is a visit of *Grace* and honour that he made us here; he visited us as great and noble persons do their inferiours, to do them honour. Hence, *whence it is to me* (says St. *Eliz.*) *that the Mother of my Lord should come unto me*, &c. ver. 43. She, good soul, knew not how to value such an honour, nor whence it was. Whence then is this, O Lord, that the Lord of that Blessed *Mother*, my Lord himself should come unto me? That's a far higher honour, and no reason of it to be given, but that so it shall be done to those whom this great King of Heaven and Earth delighteth thus to honour. 'Tis a blessing first, this that we speak of, by which God owns and honours us.

2. It was a visit of *Charity*. He visited his people as charitable men do the poor mans house, to seek some occasion to bestow an Alms. *He went about*

about doing good, says S. Peter, Acts x. 38. As poor as he was, (and the Apostle tells us, poor he was) he had a *bag for the poor*, S. John xii. 6. and for our sakes it was he *became poor*, says S. Paul, 2 Cor. viii. 9. emptied bag and himself, and all to make us rich. His visit now (2.) is a blessing that makes us rich.

3. It was a visit of *Service* too. He visited us as the *Physician* does his *Patient*, to serve his necessity, to cure and recover him. The innumerable multitudes of the sick and lame, and blind, and deaf, and dumb, and Lepers, and possessed that he daily healed and cured, will sufficiently evince he visited them also as a *Physician*. So 'twas a blessing (3.) that cures all diseases, makes all sound and whole again.

4. His visit (4.) was a visit of *brotherly love and kindness*. He visited us as David did his Brethren, to supply their wants, carry them *provision* and take their *pledge*, 1 Sam. xvii. 17. He did so, and much more, becomes *himself* by this visit our *Provision*, makes his *Body* our meat, and his *Blood* our drink, and *himself* our pledge; supplies all our defects, and wants, and enters himself body for body, and soul for soul to make all good. This a visiting no brother could do more, no brother so much.

5. His visit (5.) was not of petty kindneses, but *great mercies*, abundant mercies too. He visited us as holy David says he does the earth, Psal. lxxv. 9, 11. *Thou visitest the earth and blessest it; thou makest it very plentiful. Thou waterest her furrows, thou sendest rain into the little Vallies thereof; thou makest it soft with the drops of rain, and blessest the increase of it.* He not only furnishes our necessities, but replenishes us with abundances, makes us soft, and plump, and fat, and fruitful by his heavenly dews and showers. This (5.) a visit of abundant superabundant mercies.

6. His visit (6.) was a visit of *Friendship*, and that's more yet. He visited us as blessed Mary did her *Confin Elizabeth*, came to us to rejoyce and be merry with us. So acquainted has he now made himself with us by this visit, that he now vouchsafes to call us *friends*, S. John xv. 15. he eats, and drinks, and dwells, and tarries with us, makes it his *delight* to be among the sons of men. This is a visit I know not a name good enough to give it.

And yet lastly, his visit was not of a common and *ordinary* friendship neither, but of a friendship that holds to *death*. He visited us as the *Priest* or *Confessor* does the dying man. When health, and strength, and mirth, and Physicians, and Friends, have all given us over, he stands by and comforts us, and leaves us not till he has fitted us wholly to his own bosom. A visit of everlasting friendship, or an everlasting visit was *this* visit in the Text.

Thus I have shewed you a *seven-fold* visit, that our Lord has made us, made Gods first blessing into seven. A visit of *Honour*, a visit of *Charity*, a visit of *Service*, a visit of *Kindness*, a visit of *Mercy*, a visit of *Friendship*, and a visit of *everlasting Love*. All these ways he visited his people, and still visits them all the ways he can imagine to bless them and do them good.

And yet I should have thought I had forgot one, if it did not fall in with the blessing we are to consider next; *Redeeming*. For he visited us also as he is said to do the children of *Israel*, Gen. l. 24. to *bring us out of the Land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage*. He visited us to redeem us, or visited and redeemed.

2. Now if *redeem'd, Captives* it seems we were. And so we were, under a fourfold Captivity. To the *world*, to *Sin*, to *Death*, and to the *Devil*.
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The *world* (1.) that had ensnared and fettered us, so wholly taken us, that it had taken away our names, and we were called by the name of the *World*, instead of that of *Men*, as if we were grown such worldlings that we had even lost our natures and our names, even the best of us; the Elect are sometimes called so too. To redeem our honours and us thence, God sent his Son, says S. *John* iii. 17. and he chose us out of it, S. *John* xv. 19.

Sin (2.) that had made us Captives too, chain'd us up so fast, that the best of us cannot but cry out sometimes *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?* Rom. 7. 24. And none but this visitour, could or can: God through *Jesus Christ*, so S. *Paul* presently adds upon it, and would have us thank and bless him for it.

Death that had also got dominion over us: for no more dominion, Rom. vi. 9. signifies it had it once, and kept us shrewdly under, Rom. v. 17. But *Christ Jesus by his appearing* (they are the Apostles words) *has abolish'd death*, 2 Tim. i. 10. *Made us free from sin and death*, Rom. viii. 2.

The *Devil* (4.) he took us captive also at his will, 2 Tim. ii. 26. But for this purpose was the Son of God manifested, says S. *John*, that *he might destroy the works of the Devil*, 1 S. *John* iii. 8. And as high as the *Fiend* carries, it he will *bruise him under our feet*, Rom. xvi. 20. Now to be delivered from such masters as *these* is a blessing without question.

All the question is, how either *Zachary* could say so long before our Saviour's Birth, or we so presently upon it, he *hath* redeemed, when S. *Paul* says 'twas by *his Blood*, Col. i. 22. S. *Peter*, *through his death*, 1 S. *Peter* i. 19. Why, very well both the one and the other. At his *Birth* was this Redemption first begun, the *foundation* laid; at his *Death* 'twas *finished*. In his Incarnation and Nativity he took the flesh that died, and the blood he shed: and we might truly have been said to be redeemed by his Blood, though he had not shed it, and by his Death though he had not died; because he had already taken on our flesh and blood, and from that very moment became mortal and *began* to dye: or, to speak a little plainer, He brought the price of our Redemption with him at his Birth, He paid it down for us at his Death. The Writings as it were and Covenants between God and Him about it were *agreed* on at his Birth, were *engrossing* all his Life, and *seal'd* by him at his Death. So 'tis as true to day as any day: He *redeemed*. And had not this day been first in the business, the other could not have been at all, or first, or last. O *Blessed Day*, that hast thus laid the foundation of all our *good ones*. O ever *Blessed Lord* who hast thus visited and redeemed us; what shall we do unto thee, how shall we bless thee?

3. Nay and yet (3.) thou hast *sav'd* us too. That's the *next* blessing to be considered. And 'tis worth considering.

For redeem'd indeed we might be, and yet not saved. Redeem'd and yet fall again into the same bad hands or into worse: redeem'd from evils *past*, and yet perish by some to *come*. 'Tis this salvation that makes all safe.

Where (1.) we are saved *from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us*, ver. 71. every thing that may hereafter hurt us, as well as we were redeemed from all that did. *Nor life, nor death, nor height, nor depth, nor any thing can separate* us now from the love of God in *Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 39. all things shall continually *work for good*, ver. 28. all work henceforward for our salvation.

Especially seeing he saves us (2.) from our *sins*, as the *Angel* tells us, S. *Mat.*

S. Mat. i. 21. Does not redeem us only from the slavery of our former sins, and the punishments we lay sadly under for them, but preserves and saves us from slipping back into the old, and from falling into new ones. 'Tis a *continual* salvation.

Nay (3.) 'Tis an *eternal* one too he saves us with, *He the Author of eternal salvation*, Heb. v. 9. There we shall be safe indeed. All salvations here may have some clouds to darken them, some winds to shake them, something sometimes to interrupt them, somewhat or other to tarnish or soil their glory. New enemies may be daily raised up to us. Sin will be always bustling with us: here we had need to be sav'd and sav'd again, daily and hourly sav'd, but with *this* salvation once sav'd and sav'd for ever. Well may we pray with holy David, Psal. cvi. 4. *O visit us with this salvation*. And well may we term it now, as our Translation does, a *mighty* salvation.

4. And mighty sure we may justly stile it. For it required a mighty Power, a mighty Person, a mighty Price, and mighty works to bring such mighty things to pass. And it had them all.

1. A mighty Power: Almighty too. No created Power could do it. Horse and man and all things else but *vain* things to save a man, *to deliver his soul from the hand of Hell*, Psal. xxxiii. 17. lxxxix. 47.

2. A mighty Person, the very God of might. *I the Saviour, and besides me none*, Isa. xliii. 11. No other person able to effect it.

3. A mighty price it cost. No *corruptible* things says S. Peter, 1 Pet. i. 18. Nothing but the blood of the Son of God, the *precious Blood of Jesus Christ*, no less could compass it.

4. Mighty works lastly, and mighty workings to work things about, Miracles and wonders good store it cost to accomplish the work of our salvation, such as he only who was *mighty before God and all the people*, St. Luke xxiv. 19. could bring to pass. And this adds much to the glory of this salvation, that it was done by such great hands and ways as these.

But not the works only that wrought it, but the works it wrought speak the salvation mighty too. Mighty for certain, which neither the unworthiness of our persons, nor the weaknesses of our natures, nor the habits of our sins, nor the imperfections of our works, nor the malice of our enemies, nor any power, or strength, or subtilty of men or Devils were able to hinder or controul, but that *maugre* all, it spread it self to the very ends of the earth, carried all before it. A salvation we may trust to, we need not fear, *in this mercy of the most highest we shall not miscarry*.

5. For (5.) we have here gotten a good *Horn* to hold by, *A horn of salvation* the original gives it; a salvation not only strong but sure. Salvation, that is a *Saviour* too, one that we may confidently lay hold on, one that neither can nor will deceive or fail us: For,

1. He is a *King*; so the *Horn* signifies in the *Prophetick* phrase, Dan. vii. 8. The four, and seven, and ten Horns there, so many Kings; and it stands not with the honour of a *King* to deceive or disappoint us.

2. And he is not a King without a *Kingdom*. He hath a Kingdom (2.) and power to help us. The Horn signifies that too in the stile of *Prophecie*, because in the Horn lies the strength, and power, and dominion as it were of the creature that hath it. And the power of a Kingdom I can tell you is good hold.

3. And this Kingdom (3.) is not an *ordinary* Kingdom neither. As this Horn is above the *Flesh*, so this Kingdom too; not of *this world*, St.

John

John xviii. 36. the likelier still to conduct us to the other, and there set us safe.

And yet likelier (4.) because it is not a fading but a *durable* one, a horn that will hold. *Saul* was anointed with a *vial* of *Oyl*, 1 *Sam.* x. 1. to intimate the *brittleness* and *shortness* of his Kingdom; but *David* with a *horn*, 1 *Sam.* xvi. 13. to signify the *continuance* and *strength* of his; that it should be a throne established for ever, 1 *Kings* ii. 45. And made good it was by this *days* Horn rais'd out of his house; of whose Kingdom *there shall be no end*, says the *Prophet*. So no failure to be afraid of here. It is a sure salvation we have by him.

And if I may now have the liberty to tell you more particularly what *kind* of Horn he may most fairly be said to be, you will be the more ready to catch at it.

He is then (1.) a Horn of *Oyl* to anoint *us* also *Kings* and *Priests*; for so he makes us, says *S. John*, *Rev.* i. 6.

He is (2.) the true *Cornucopia*, the Horn of plenty; full of grace and truth, and all good things else: for out of *his* fulness we all receive *ours*, says the same *Apostle*, *S. John* i. 16.

He is (3.) one of the Horns of the *Altar*, or indeed all of them, whither we may safely fly in all our dangers and distresses; where we may lie secure when all the world has left us. A sure hold now you will confess, that is so high, so strong, so powerful, so above corruption, so lasting, so everlasting, so full of lasting honours, plenties, and securities.

6. And yet as mighty, and sure, and as easie to catch hold on as this salvation is, were it not for this *us*, were it not for *us*, had we no claim, no interest in it, what were we the better either for the Horn or the salvation? 'Tis this *for us*, that comes next to be considered, that raises up *our* horns, that makes us glad.

For this *us*, this *us* is not the *Jews* alone. They had the *first* title, right indeed, but not the *only* to it. There is an *Israel* of God (peace be upon it says the *Apostle*, *Gal.* vi. 16.) as well as an *Israel* after the flesh. There are Sons of *Abrahams* Faith as well as of his body, to whom this salvation is sent as well as unto them. Blessed *Zachary* brings in those that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death into the number, *ver.* 79. the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews* into the light of it; 'tis *omni populo*, to all people whatsoever, in the Angels message, *chap.* 2. of our Evangelist, *ver.* 10.

All people, and all degrees and orders of them, rich and poor, one with another; so *populus* signifies, not the *plebem* taken out of it, not the lowest or meanest of the people escaped or forgotten. 'Tis an *universal* salvation that is here set up. God does not streighten heaven, though men do. *He would have all men to be saved*, 1 *Tim.* ii. 4. (though some men need a horn indeed to get such a salvation down, yet so it is) and to this purpose he has rais'd this salvation up, which is the next advance of this salvation we are next to handle.

7. And he rais'd it (1.) as a *Beacon* or *Standard* upon a Hill, that all Nations and Languages, all kind of persons might flock in unto it.

Rais'd it (2.) as from the *Dead*, *νεκρῶν*. All hopes of it now were in the dust. For the temporal condition of the *Jews*; their enemies oppressed them, and had them in subjection; long they had so; and all the attempts for deliverance had been so often baffled, that they durst hope no longer. For their spiritual condition, both *Jew* and *Gentile* were all concluded under sin; the one blinded with his own superstition, the other shut up in ignorance, and darkness, when on a sudden was this day-spring from

from on high, this horn, this ray of light (for I see not why this Horn, as well as those of *Moses* face, may not be construed so) this ray, this Horn, I say, rais'd up to light them both into the ways of salvation.

Rais'd up (3.) as the *horn* out of the *flesh*, a Saviour rais'd up *thence* to day. Though from above he came, into the flesh he came, that thence being made sensible of our infirmities, he might the easier bear with them.

Rais'd up lastly to raise up our thoughts from all inferiour expectations, and fix them where they should be for deliverance and salvation, *Cornu exaltatum*, this salvation eminent for the vastness, the opportunity, the convenience, the proportion it carries: the seventh particular we observe in Gods blessing, the fourth advancing of this salvation.

8. There is an *eighth*: And it is salvation in the *right house*. The Lord of the *Ascendant* of our salvation in the *Kingly* house, the best house to make it the more glorious, the house of *David*. Men would willingly be sav'd honourably, by a person of honour rather than a base hand. Men love not to owe their lives or honours to an unworthy person, would be beholding to the *right* King rather than an *Usurper* for them. The *House* of *David* here hits right for *that*. And we cannot but acknowledge a huge blessing in it, even upon this account, that how poorly, sneakingly, and basely we every day betray our selves into the hands of our enemies, we are yet thus by *Christ* brought off with honour, and enjoy by *him* an honourable salvation.

9. And yet there is one thing more we would desire, not to owe our selves to a villain, or a miscreant, or to a wicked and ungodly house or person. To crown his blessings, God has contrived them in the house of his *servant David*. So God honoureth his servants; so he encourages them to be good. *They* are the persons, *theirs* the houses where salvation dwells. They are the pillars of the earth. To *David* his *servant*, and *Abraham* his *servant*, and *Isaac* his *servant*, and *Israel* his *servant*, so run the promises both of a Saviour and salvation, to *them* and to their *seed* for evermore.

Sum we up Gods blessings now. Gracious *Visits*, perfect *Redemptions*, Salvations *many*, *mighty*, *sure*, *general*, *eminent*, *seasonable*, *honourable* salvations to *us* and *ours*, *everlasting* too: what would you more? there's nothing behind now but *our* blessing God for all these blessings. I hope that shall not be so long, for 'tis but little that is required for so much; and but three particulars that make it up. An *acknowledgment* of Gods blessings, a *setting* our selves to some way to *bless* him for them; and a *desire* that *all* would do so too.

II. The acknowledgment begins it, the acknowledging of Gods blessings the first part of *ours*; so sure a point of it, that *Confiteri*, to acknowledge or confess the blessing, or him that sends it, is above sixty times in the Book of *Psalms* set down for *blessing*. And whole *Psalms* you have that are nothing else but an enumeration and catalogue of blessings, the 66. the 103. the 104. the 105. the 107. the 136. And the more particular we are in it, the more we bless him. You have heard how particular *Zachary* is in it here. *He* hath visited, *he* hath redeemed, &c. given us nine particulars, leaves neither *gift* nor *giver* unacknowledged. Honourable it is to do so: honourable to reveal, to *reveal* the *works* of God, says the Angel, *Job* xii. 7. honourable to *him*, honourable to *us*: we cannot honour God without it, nor expect honour from him, if

if we will not acknowledge it. Come, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul, is the best way to begin our blessing.

2. But it is but to begin it. We must go on to the next way of blessing, set close to it *Εὐλογεῖς* from *εὐλογεῖν*, and *Benedictus* from *Benedicere*; both tell us there is much of it in words. Only *verbum* is *factum*, and *dicere* is *facere*, sometimes in the holy page. So we must take both words and deeds to do it with. The word by the hand of thy servant, as the Scripture sometimes speaks, is the best way to bless him with. Yet to our *benedicere* in the first sense first. And to do that, to give him good words is the least that we can give him: let us be sure then not to grudge him them. Confess we that he is good, and gracious, and merciful, full of mercy, plentiful in goodness and truth. Streighten we not his visits, stifle we not his Redemption, coop we not up his salvation to a corner, suffer we it to run large and full, that the whole world may bless him for it.

Let us (2.) speak it out. Gods blessings were not done in a corner, no more must ours. Publick and solemn they would be. And the Church has made it (and Text) part of the publick service, that every one might bear a part in blessing God. Every one of us, and every thing of us too, our souls and all that is within us, heart and mind, and all. All within and all without us, our lips praise him, our mouths praise him, our hands praise him, our flesh praise him, our bones say who is like him, all the members of our body turn themselves into tongues to bless him.

Bless we him (3.) in set Hymns on purpose in good votes and wishes, that his Church may prosper, his Name be magnified, his Glory advanced to the highest pitch, for *bene dicere*, is *bene vovere* too.

And *sanctificare* is no less. To bless is sometimes to *sanctifie*. So God blessed the seventh day, is God hallow'd it; and to sanctifie a day, or place to bless him in, is to bless him by his own pattern that he hath set us: well said, if well done, I dare assure you, to set apart both times and places to bless him in.

2. But *dicere* is not all, sung never sweetly, said never so well. The Lord bless thee in common phrase is, the Lord do good unto thee. Indeed Gods blessing is always such; his *benedicere* is *bene facere*. His saying is a doing, his blessing a making blessed. 'Tis fit our blessing should be somewhat like it. To himself indeed we can do no good. He neither wants it, nor can be better'd by it. To His we may. Though not to his head, yet to his feet: The poor; we may bless them. And the blessing them is blessing him: for *inasmuch as ye have done it unto these, you have done it unto me*, says he himself, S. Mat. xxv. And truly it must needs be a poor blessing that cannot reach his feet. Nay 'tis a poor one if it reach no higher.

Indeed he that giveth alms, he sacrifices praise, says the Son of Syrach, Eccles. xxxv. 2. And praise is blessing. But to bless is to honour too. And honour the Lord with thy substance, says a wiser then the Son of Syrach, Prov. iv. Something must be done to his own honour. Something given or offered to support that here among us; for to bless is to give thanks, and that intimates somewhat to be given to him, as well as said or spoken to him. It will else be *verba dare*, and not *gratias*, a meer cheating him of our thanks. As soon as Naaman the Syrian was cured of his Leprosie, he begs of the Prophet to accept a blessing for it. Nature had taught him God was to be blest so, 2 Kings v. 15. When the Captains of Israel had found by their whole numbers how God had delivered them, they come with a blessing in their hands of sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels of gold for the house of God, Numb. xxxi. 52. David and his people the story

tells us *blest* him so too, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 20, 21. offered incredible sums of Gold and Silver for the service of the house of God. And let me tell you, without *begging* for it, that the *House* of God being now by this *Visit* in the Text made the very *office* of salvation, where he daily visits us, and entertains us with his Body and Blood, with holy conferences and discourses, where he seals us every day to the day of Redemption, and offers to us all the means of salvation; there can be no way of blessing God so answerable and proportionable to his thus blessing us, as *thus* blessing him again.

Yet where there is nothing thus to bless him with, there is yet another way of blessing him; nay where there are other ways, *this* must be too. To bless him is to glorify him, and a good life does that, *S. Mat.* v. 16. By our ill lives the name of God is *blasphemed*, says the *Apostle*, *Rom.* ii. 24. Then by our good ones it must needs be *blest*. *Zachary* seems to point at this way of blessing, when he tells us we were delivered that we might serve our *Visitor* in *holiness* and *righteousness*, ver. 75. And *thus* he that has neither eyes to look up, nor hands to lift up, nor feet to go up to the house of blessing, nor tongue to bless him, nor so much as a Cross to bless himself or God; not a mite to throw into his treasure, may truly bless him, and be accepted. To this and all the other ways of blessing is the Text set. And let all now come in and bear a part in blessing. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, is now lastly a call to call them in.

The Prophet *David* does so, *Psal.* cxlviii. *Sun*, and *Moon*, and *Stars*, and *Light*, *Heaven*, and *Earth*, and *Waters*, both above and under them, *Dragons*, and *Deepes*, *Fire*, and *Hail*, and *Snow*, and *Vapour*, and *wind*, and *Storm*, and *Hills*, and *Trees*, and *Beasts*, and *Cattel*, *worms*, and *Fowl*, *Kings* and *People*, *Princes* and *Judges*, *Young men* and *Maidens*, *Old men* and *Children*, all *Sexes*, *Degrees*, and *Ages*, *Men* and *Angels*, and all kind of *Beings* does he call on to praise, and bless, and magnify their *Creator*: Indeed the whole Creation is blessed by this *visit*, so 'tis but just they should bless God for it.

Yet how should all these things we mentioned do it? many of them have no tongues to say, many no sense to understand it. Why? they do it yet: The *Sun* by day, the *Moon* by night may become torches to light his servants service. The *Earth* brings forth her *Corn* and *Wine* to furnish out his *Table*; the deep gives up her *Riches*, and brings home *Golds* and *Silks* to adorn his *Holy Altars*; the *Earth* brings *Stones* and *Minerals*, the *Hills* and *Mountains* *Trees* and *Cedars* to his *House*, the fire kindles *Tapers* for it, all the meteors of the air, and all the seasons of the years do somewhat, every wind blows somewhat towards it. The very *Birds* and *Swallows* get as near the *Altar* as they can to bless him; the *Snow*, and *Cold*, and *Ice* crowd as near *Christmas* as they can, to bear a part in this great Solemnity, in our solemnest thanksgivings. Only he that has no need of this visit, no need of *Christ* or his *Redemption*, that cares not to be saved, needs keep no *Christmas*, may stand out, or sit, or do what he will at this *Benedictus*.

But sure when all things else thus come in throngs to bless him, and even *Ice* and *Snow* come hot and eager to this Feast, and willingly melt themselves into his praises, we should not, methinks, come coldly on to bless him, but come and bring our *Families*, and *Children*, and *Neighbours* with us to make the *Choir* as full as possibly we can. Tell one another what *Christ* did to day, what he every day does for us, how he visited us to day, how he still visits us every morning, how he redeemed us

us to day, how he does day by day from one ill or other; how he began to day to raise up salvation for us, and will not leave raising it for us till we can rise no higher. Tell we our children next, how in *this* God had respect to *David* his *anointed*, and that *they* must learn to have so. How he had regard to *David* his *Servant*, will have *so* to *them* if they be his servants let them therefore be sure they be so, fit them thus to sing their parts betimes in Hymns, and Anthems, and praises to their God; that they that cannot speak, may yet list it out, and when they can speak out, sing it loud and shrill, that the hollow Vaults and Arches may *eccho* and rebound his praises: not your Children only, but stones also be thus rais'd up for children unto *Abraham*. 'Tis in the power of your hands (grave Senators, Fathers, and Brethren) to make the stones cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber to answer, Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power to him that has rais'd up to us so great salvation.

I look upon this great *Solemnity* of yours as a meer design of blessing God, and the *Torches* that light you hither as so many lights set up to make the light of your good works shine the greater. You have not only these blessings in the *Text*, but *millions* more to invite you to it. Not to repeat the blessings and deliverances I have told you; all blessings and salvations else you owe to this days *Visit* of the Almighty, to this Horn he rais'd up for us. Let us bring *them* also into the roll, and thus blebs him for them.

Some of you *he* has delivered out of *trouble*, blebs you him for *that*. Some of you he has recovered lately from a *sickness*, blebs you him for *that*. Some of you he has delivered lately from a *danger*, blebs you him for *that*. You he has visited in *distress*, visit you his *Temples*, his *poor* and *needy* servants, and blebs him *so*. *You* he has redeemed of late from the gates of *death*, redeem you the *time* hereafter, walk circumspectly and soberly, and for the rest of your life serve him better, and blebs him *so*. *You* he has sav'd out of the hands of *Hereticks* and *Seducers*, save you your selves henceforward from that *untoward generation*, and come no more among them. Pay him visit for visit, redemption for redemption, one salvation for another, and blebs him *so*. *You* he has rais'd to some *honour* and preferment, raise you up some *pillar* of thanksgiving for it. You he has rais'd to an *estate*, raise you up some *memorial* to him out of it. *You* he has rais'd out of *nothing*, you out of a *desperate* condition, your house and family out of *ruines*; help you God again to raise *his* house, and he will say, you blebs him for it. Let there be some token of gratitude set up here, as God set the *Rain-bow* in the Clouds, *Gen. xix. 15.* that he may look upon it, and remember, and save you in the time of need, with his mercy for it.

In a word, God has *signally* and *strangely* visited us of late years with his salvation, redeemed us from our *enemies*, and all that *hate* us; those *Horns*, that like those in *Daniel* pusht down and scattered all before them, that threw down our Temples, took away our daily service, set up the *abomination of desolation in these holy places*, Horse, and Foot, and Arms, and all the instruments of desolation, and stamp't upon all holy things and persons: he has rais'd us up a mightier horn to make those horns draw in theirs; a horn in the *house* of his servant *David*: restored our *David* his *anointed* to us, kept him *his* servant, returned him *as* he went, safe and sound in the principles of his Religion, restored *him* and *his* house, *us* and *ours*, kept them at least from utterly *pulling* down. O that men would therefore now praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare the wonders he has lately done for the children of men.

As many *Scarlets* now as you please to adorn your *gratitudes*, as many *Torches* now as you please that we may see *them*, what solemn *processions* now as you judge fit to make to evidence your blessings to the Lord God of *Israel*, for what he has done for us, for either our souls, bodies or estates. So shall God again bless all your blessings to you; the poor shall bless us, and the *Church* shall bless us, and these walls shall bless us, and the children yet unborn shall bless us, and all our blessings be continued to us; we shall be visited, and redeem'd, and sav'd upon all occasions, in all necessities, on every hand, and at every turn, till he bring us at last to his eternal salvation, to sing eternal Allelujahs, everlasting *Benedictus's*, Hymns, and Praises, with all the Blessed Saints and Angels to God blessed for evermore.

To this glorious blessing he bring us all, who this day came to visit us, that he might, Jesus Christ. To whom, &c.

THE

THE SEVENTH SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

2 C O R. viii. 9.

For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

FOR ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. And do you know any grace of the Lord Jesus Christ like this *days* grace, the grace of *Christmas*? any grace or favour like that grace and favour he this *day* did us, when he so grac'd our nature as to take it on him? surely, whether this grace be his becoming poor, or our making rich, never was it seen more then this *day* it was. Never was he poorer then this *day* shew'd him, a poor little naked thing in rags. Never we rich till this *day* made us so, when he being rich became poor, that *we* being poor might be made rich.

And rich not in the worst, but in the *best* riches; rich in grace, but above all grace in *Christmas* grace, in love and liberality to the poor, the very grace which the Apostle brings in the poverty of Christ here to perswade the *Corinthians* to. See (says he) *that ye abound in this grace also*, ver. 7. *For ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.* He was so full of it, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, made himself poor to make us rich; that being made rich we might be rich: To the poor, bestow some of his own riches upon him again, *some* at least upon him who gave us *all*, supply his poverty who enricht ours, be the more bountiful to the poor, seeing he is now become like one of them, that as through his poverty we were made rich, so even in our very poverty we might abound also to the *riches of liberality*. So the *Macedonians* did, ver. 2. So would he fain have the *Corinthians* too here, in covert terms; so he would be understood, and so are we to understand him. Christs poverty here brought in as an argument to perswade to liberality.

A grace so correspondent to the pattern of the *Lord Jesus*, so answerable

able both to the purport of *Christmas* and the purpose of the *Text*, that 'tis hard to say whether the *Day* better explains the *Text*, or the *Text* the *Day*. For whether we take the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ towards us, downward, or the grace of the Lord Jesus in us towards him upward: whether for the grace he did us in becoming poor for our sakes, or for the grace we are to shew to his poor members for his sake again, for his becoming poor, and making of us rich: I see not how or where I could have chosen a better *Christmas* Text, a Text for the *Day*, or a *Day* for the *Text*.

For here is both the *Doctrine* and *Use* of Christmas; the *Doctrine* of Christ's free Grace, and the free *Use* and *Application* of it too. The *Doctrine*, That our Lord Jesus Christ though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that through his poverty we might be rich.

The *Use*, That we are to know it, and acknowledge it, know it for a grace and favour; yea know the grace, know it for a pattern too: For ye know it, that is, to that end ye know it, to take pattern by it, to return grace again for grace, to shew grace to *him*, for his grace to *us*, to supply his poverty in his members, for his so gracious supplying ours, to answer the riches of his grace with being rich; in this *grace* also, in the grace of love and charity to the poor, the best way to be rich, and to abound to the riches of his glory.

But more to appropriate it to the *Day*, you may please to take it in these particulars. *Christ's Birth*, *The Christians benefit*, *The evidence of both*. *The Inference upon all*.

1. *Christ's Birth*. *Egenus factus, when he became poor.*
2. *The Christians benefit*. *Propter nos it was, for your sakes it was, & ut vos divites, That ye through his poverty might be rich.*
3. *The evidence of both*, *Scitis, no less then that of Science, ye know it.*
4. *The inference upon all*, *Scitis enim, For ye know it, for what? for a grace and favour; Scitis gratiam, the first. And ut vos divites essetis, that we might be rich in the same grace he was: Then secondly, that ye may do answerable to your knowledge; for propter nos it is, for our sakes he became poor, that for his sake we might look the better upon the poor; for that he made us rich, that we might be rich in good works; for that he made us rich by the way of poverty, that we might know our riches have a near relation to poverty, are given us for the poor, as well as for our selves.*

These are the *parts*, and of all these the *sum* is, that Christ's Birth is the Christians benefit; the knowledge of which ought to stir us up to Christian Charity: or nearer the phrase of the *Text*, that our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich, became poor to make us rich; rich in all good gifts and graces, but especially in this of love and mercy to the poor; came down in grace to us to that purpose, both in the *Text*, and in the *Day*, the whole and business of them both. I shall prosecute it in order, and begin with those words in the *Text* that seem to point us to the Birth of Christ; *egenus factus*: and if that were the original, the *factus* would be plain for his being made man. But as it is, 'tis plain enough, he could not become poor but by becoming man.

I. For there is not so poor a thing as *man*; indeed no creature poor but man: no creature lost its estate, and place, and honour, thrust out of doors, and turned as it were a begging abroad into the wide world, but man. Other creatures keep their nature and place to which they were created; man only he kept nothing; first lost his clothes, his robe
of

of innocence, in which he was first clad, was then turned naked out of his dwelling, out of *Paradise*, only his nakedness covered a little with a few ragged leaves, fain upon that to work, and toil, and labour for his living to get his bread; forc'd to run here and there about the world to get it; all the creatures that were lately but his servants stood gazing and wondering at him, and knew him not, would no longer own him for their *Lord*, he look'd so poor, so despicable when he had sinn'd; they that before were all at his command, by the dominion he had received over them, now neither obey'd his command, nor knew his voice, so perfectly had he lost the very semblance of their late great Master, so perfectly poor was he become. The *Devil* kept a power, and awe, and *Principality*, though he lost his seat; got a *Kingdom* though he lost his *glory*: But man lost all, glory and grace, riches and honour, estate and power, peace and ease, shelter, and safety, and all: so that to become poor can be nothing else but to become man; and *Christ's* becoming so, must be his becoming man.

Yet not to know it *only*, but to know it for a *grace*, as *St. Paul* would have us, we must know *who* it is that became poor. (2.) *How poor* he became who became poor. (3.) *What* he was still, though he became poor. Our Lord *Jesus Christ*, says the Text, *he* it is, *egenus factus*, he came to very want, *ἐνδεύων*, to a kind of penury like that of beggars. Yet *πλὴν ὧν* for all that it is, he continued rich still, though he was poor; he could not lose his infinity of riches, though he took on his poverty, quitted not his *Deity*, though he covered it with the rags of his humanity.

We first look upon his person, our Lord *Jesus Christ*. He is a Lord it seems that became poor, that first: and truly the first and only time that we read he entituled himself *Lord*, it follows presently, *he hath need*, *St. Mat. xxi. 3.* The Lord hath need. This may be true, as the *Italian* observes of the Lords and Princes of the world, none need commonly so much as they, nor they before they came to be Lords and Princes; but of the Lord and Prince of Heaven, as our Lord surely is, that's somewhat strange that he should have any need; yet so it is: and it may serve to teach the best of us, of men, Lords and great ones too, to be content sometimes to suffer need, seeing the Lord of Lords was found poor.

Jesus (2.) it is, was found so. *Jesus* is a *Saviour*, and that's stranger. A Saviour that is poor is like to prove but a poor Saviour. Yet this is oftentimes Gods method, the *poor and base things* of the world, and things that are despis'd, to *confound the rich*, and *noble*, and *the mighty*, *1 Cor. i. 28.* that no flesh, as the Apostle infers there, might glory in *his* presence. This very name of *Jesus* was then sent by an *Angel* to be given him, when he had first told he should be *born*, *St. Mat. i. 21.* born of a poor Virgin, and yet save his people from their sins; that we may know God needs nothing to help him; his very poverty is our *salvation*. *Jesus* poor, the poorest contemptible means he can save us by.

Nay even the *Christ* (3.) the *Messiah* so long expected; comes poor when he was expected rich, to shew the vanity of mens conceit and fancies, when they will go alone. *Christ* the King of *Israel*, the great *Prophet*, the everlasting *High Priest*, and *Arch-bishop* of our souls, he came poor, that men might give over looking upon the outward appearance of things, and think it no diminution to the calling of *Priest* or *Prophet* to be sometimes in a low and mean condition, seeing the *Christ* himself anointed with the holy oil above all *Priests* and *Prophets*, came in no other.

And now this we have gotten by considering the person, that if he
that

that is Priest, and Prophet, and Saviour, and Lord, and the Lord of all may become poor, and God do all his work notwithstanding by him; then poverty is neither dishonourable in it self, nor so disadvantageous in its own nature, but that God can still make use of it to his Service, does still most make use of it, dispences his heavenly treasure to us more commonly in *earthen vessels*, 2 Cor. iv. 7. then in Gold and Silver, and we therefore not to slight the Ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, though become poor, *their bodily presence weak, and their speech contemptible*, as St. Pauls undervaluers speak, 2 Cor. x. 10. For their Lord and ours became poor himself, as poor as the poorest, which will appear by the second consideration. I am now to shew you *how poor* he became, of whom it is here said he became poor.

And that not only that poor *thing* called man, that poor worm and dust, that poor *vanity* and *nothing*, we call man, but the very poorest of the name; the *novissimus virorum*, the lag and fag of all, a very *scum of men*, says the Prophet, and the *very out-cast of the people*. So poor that there is not a way to be poor *in*, but he was poor *in*.

1. Poorly *descended*, a poor *Carpenters Wife* his Mother.

2. Poorly *born*, in a Stable among Beasts; poorly wrapt in *rags*, poorly cradled in a *Manger*, poorly bedded upon a lock of *Hay*, poorly attended by the *Oxe* and *Ass*, poorly every way provided for, not a fire to dress him at in the depth of Winter, only the steam and breath of the Beasts to keep him warm, Cobwebs for *Hangings*, the dung of the Beasts for his *Perfumes*, noise and lowings, neighing and brayings for his *Musick*; every thing as poor about him as want and necessity could make it.

3. Poorly *bred* too, a *Carpenter*, it seems by S. Mark vi. 5. at his reputed Fathers Trade.

4. Poorly *living* too, not a house to put his head in, not a pillow of his own to lay his head on, S. Luke ix. 57. not a room to sup in but what he borrow'd, S. Mark xiv. 15. no money, nor meat but by miracle, S. Mat. xvii. 27. or by charity, S. Mat. ix. 10. not so much as a Bucket to draw water, or a cup to drink it in, St. John iv. 11. Nay more, for *ἐν ὧν* is more, he was poor even to *beggary*, was fain to beg even water it self, in the last cited Chapter, *ver. 7.* had a bag carried always by one of his *Disciples* to receive any thing that charitable minded people would put into it, St. John xii. 6. his *Disciples* were so low driven following him, that they were fain sometimes to *pull the ears of Corn*, as they passed by, to satisfy their hunger; *five or seven loaves*, with *two or three little fishes* among them all, was great provision with them. Indeed we read not punctually that he begg'd at any time, but we see him as near it, as was possible, if he did not; and the word *ἐπιβόηον* in all *profane* Writers never signifies less.

But let it be but what we translate it, merely *poor*, though the Prophet David in the Person of Christ, Psalm xl. 18. cries *Mendicus sum & pauper*, I am a poor beggar; be it yet but poor, yet so poor it is he was, that he was poor in all, every way poor. Poor in *Spirit*, none poorer, none more willing to be trampled on; suffered men to *blow upon his back*, and make long furrows, make a poor thing of him indeed, do any thing what they would with him: poor in flesh too. *They may tell all my bones*, says the Prophet of him, Psalm xxii. 17. *they stand staring and looking upon me*, a meer gazing-stock of poverty, a miracle of poverty, marvellous poor, poor in *reputation*. *He made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a Servant*, says St. Paul, Phil. ii. 7, 8. of a servant, of a *slave*, valued at the lowest price, a
man

man could be, *thirty pieces of Silver*. So poor he could scarce speak out. *Non clamabit* says the *Prophet*, he shall not cry; he did not, says the *Evangelist*, S. Mat. xii. 18. It was fulfilled. You could scarce hear his voice in the streets, *ver.* 19. In a word, so poor that he was as I may say, ashamed of his name, denied it as it were to him that called him by it, S. *Matth.* xix. 17. *Why callest thou me good?* when yet he only was so.

Lastly, poor he was in his *Death* too; betray'd by one Disciple, denied by another, forsaken by the rest, stript off to his very skin, abus'd, derided, despis'd by all; died the most ignominious death of all, the death of Slaves and Varlets. And can you now tell me how he should become poorer? or can you tell me why we should think much at any time to become poor like him? or not rather cry out, O *Blessed Poverty* that art now sanctified by Christs putting on? How canst thou but be desirable and becoming since Christ himself became poor? If God become man, what man would be an Angel though he might? If Christ the eternal riches think it becomes him to be poor, who would make it his business to be rich? Give me rags for clothes, bread for meat, and water for drink, a Stable for a Palace, the earth for a bed, and straw for a covering, so Christ be in them, so he be with them, so this poverty be his, so it be for him. I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest upon the hardest stone, or coldest ground, and I will eat my brownest bread and pulse, and drink my water or my *tears* with joy and gladness, now they are seasoned by my Masters use. I will neglect my body and submit my spirit, and hold my peace even from *good words* too, because he did so: I will be content with all, because he was so. The servant must not be better than his Lord, nor the Disciple than his Master. Our *Lord* poor, our *Jesus* poor, our *Christ* poor, and we striving to be rich, what an incongruity? *The Camel and the needles eye never fitted worse*. Poverty we must be contented with if we will have him; poor at least in spirit we must be, ready for the other when it comes; and when it comes we must think it is becoming, very much become the Disciple to be like the Master, the servant wear his Lords livery. For our sakes he became poor, and we must not therefore think much to be made so for his, be it to an *ἐπ' ὀχέου*, the extreamest.

Especially seeing poverty is no such *Gorgon*, no such terrible lookt *Monster* since Christ wore it over his richest Robes, even chose to be poor though he was rich, would needs be poor, and appear to be so for all his riches. Indeed it was the riches of his grace that made him poor; had he not been rich, superlatively rich in that, in grace and favour to us, he would never have put on the *tatters* of humanity, never at least have put on the raggedest of them all, not only the *poverty* of our *nature*, but even the *nature* of *poverty*, that he might become like one of us, and dwell among us. And it was the riches of his glory too, that could turn this poverty to his glory. What glory like that which makes all things glorious, rags and beggary? what riches like his, or who so rich as he that can make poverty more glorious then the Robes and Diadems of Kings and Emperours? who so often for his Religion sake have quitted all their secular glories, plenties, delicates, and attendants, for russet coats, and ordinaty fare, and rigours, and hardships, above that which wandering beggars suffer in the depth of Winter. Christianity no sooner began to dawn into day, but that we find the professors selling all, *Acts* iv. as if they thought it an *indecentcy* at least to possess more than their Master did; though they were rich they became poor, because their Lord became so though he was rich.

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But when men of rich become poor, the case is much different yet from that of Christs; men cease to be rich when they come to poverty, but not so Christ; he is poor and rich together. (3.) *πλούσιος ὁ ἐν πτωχείᾳ*, being rich he yet shewed poor, *Prov. xxii. 2.* The rich and poor meet together never truer any way then here, & *utriusque operator est Dominus*, the Lord is both himself, as well as worker of them both in others. For in this low condition of his it is that S. Paul yet talks so often of the riches of Christ, the *riches of his grace*, Eph. i. 7. the *riches of his Glory*, Eph. iii. 16. the *riches of the glory of his inheritance*, Eph. i. 18. the exceeding greatness of his power, Eph. i. 19. the *exceeding riches*, Eph. ii. 7. the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, Ephes. iii. 8. Christ he in whom are hid all the *treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. his *very reproach and poverty greater riches then all the treasures of Egypt*, Heb. xi. 26. So Moses thought and reckon'd, says the Apostle, when he saw his riches but under a veil, saw but a glimpse and shadow of them, at two thousand years distance too. So rich is Christ, ὁ πλούσιος; the only rich, so great are his riches.

Indeed the riches of the Godhead, that is, all riches indeed dwell all in him; though he became man, he left not to be God, our rags only cover'd the Robes of the Divinity, his poverty only serv'd for a veil to cover those unspeakable riches, to teach us not to boast and brag at any time of our riches, not to exalt our selves when we are made rich, or when the glory of our house is increased, but to be as humble notwithstanding as the poorest and lowest wretch, to teach us (2.) that riches and poverty may stand together as well in *Christians* as in *Christ*; the riches of grace and the poverty of estate; and again the riches of estate and poverty of Spirit. To teach us (3.) not to put off the riches of grace, for fear of poverty; not quit our Religion or our innocence for fear of becoming poor by them: to teach us *lastly* that we may be rich in Gods sight, in truth and verity, how poor soever we are in the eyes of the world, how needy and naked soever we appear. He that being in the form of God thought it no robbery to be equal with God, even whilst he was so, made himself of no reputation, of as low a rank as could be; and being the brightness of his Fathers Glory, the express image of his person, and upholding all things with the word of his power, veils all this glory, darkens all this brightness, conceals all this power under the infirmities and necessities of flesh and poverty, yet only veils all this great riches, hides and lays it up for us, that through his poverty we might be rich. The next point we are to handle, the *Christians* benefit from *Christs Birth*, the *Christians* gain by *Christs losses*, the *Christians* making rich by *Christs* being made poor.

II. And need had he to be rich indeed to enrich so many; need to be rich whose very *poverty* can enrich us: to speak the very truth, his very poverty is our riches. It is his rags that clothed our nakedness, it is his stable that builds us Palaces, it is his hunger that filled our emptiness, it is his thirst that takes off our driness, it is his necessity that supplies all ours; he made himself a slave to make us free, a servant to make us sons; he came down to lift us up, he became as it were nothing to make us all. The very poverty of Christ is the riches of the Christian, and he that can chearfully put that on after him, is rich indeed, can want nothing: for he that can be content to be poor for Christ, who though he has nothing is content, he wants not though he has not; and if he want not, he is rich, nay only rich: for he that wants but the least, though he have never so much, never so full coffers, never so many possessions, nay
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and Kingdoms too, he is not rich with all his riches. The poor pious soul that lives contented in his Cell, and feeds on nothing but bread and water, and joys in it because it is for Christ, he is rich, and abounds, and has all, sleeps securer in a *wilderness* amongst wild Beasts, softer upon *Jacobs* Pillar, warmer under the vast Canopy of Heaven, than great Princes in their fortified Castles, upon the Doun of Swans, with all their Silks and Embroideries about them: for neither a *mans* life, nor his riches consist in the abundance of the things that he possesseth, St. Luke xii. 15. He is rich whom Christs poverty, or poverty for Christ enriches with godliness and contentment. *That's great gain*, that is, great riches, says St. Paul. So great that we need not look after the petty, fading, transitory riches of the world, they are but dross and dung compared to the true riches, the riches of grace and glory we have by Jesus Christ.

For call the rich man whom you will, seek all the expressions the Scripture has to call the rich man by: He that is rich in the grace of Christ may lay title to them all. He that abounds in Gold and Silver, is he rich? Behold, Christ calls to us to *buy gold of him tried in the fire*, that we may be rich, Rev. iii. 18. and *he sells all without mony*, Isa. lv. 1. 'tis then easie coming by it, easie being rich: nay, the very trial of our Faith is *more precious then gold*, 1 St. Pet. i. 7. A Christian in the forest trials, poverty, or reproach, or death, is rich you hear in being so. He that has abundance of rich clothes and garments, is he rich? Christ calls us to buy them too at the same easie rate, *white rayment*, the rayment of Princes, and great men, in the forenamed place of the *Revelation*, and with the long white Robe of Christs Righteousness, the faithful Christian is apparelled; so none richer in *clothes* than he. He that heaps up Silver like the dust, and molten Gold like the clay in the streets, is he rich? How rich then is he that counts the silver like the dust, and the gold like clay, who is so rich that he contemns those *riches*? He that has his garners full of Wheat, and his presses with new Wine, is he rich say ye? How rich then is he that lives wholly upon heavenly *Manna*, and drinks the Wine of *Angels*, as the true Christian does? He that washes his steps in Butter, and has Rivers of Oyl flowing to him out of the Rock, is he rich? How much richer then is he that is anointed with the *heavenly* Oyl, with the oyl of perpetual joy and gladness in the *Spirit*, as the true believer is? He that abounds in Cattel, who cannot number his herds and flocks, is he rich, tell me? how mightily far richer is he that possesses God, *whose are all the Beasts of the Mountains, and all the Cattel upon a thousand Hills*; and him he possesses that possesses Christ, that is, one of his, the poorest of them; he that has stately and magnificent houses good store, richly deckt and furnisht too, is he rich think you? if he be, how infinitely more rich are they who have Heaven for their house, and all the Furniture fit for theirs? In a word, may he be called rich, who is highly born, richly seated, gloriously attended? how rich then is he that is born of God, as the true Christian is? whom he makes to *sit together with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*, Ephes. ii. 6. upon whom the Angels continually attend, about whom they daily pitch their Tents, to whom they are all but ministring Spirits sent forth to wait upon them as upon the *heirs of salvation*, Heb. i. 14. Will not all this serve the turn? what then plainer now at last, then that he tells us he has made us *Kings and Priests*, Rev. i. 6. Kings they cannot come under a lower notion then rich; and though Priests of late are not always so, yet a *Royal Priesthood*, as St. Peter calls us, 1 St. Pet. ii. 9. will be rich.

So that now after the several stiles of rich men in *Scripture* you see the Christian may be truly stiled rich, if either abundance or increase, clothes or furniture, houses or attendants, may be said to make one rich, or if Kings themselves may be called such.

Yet above all this, he is richer still, even in poverty he is rich, and can make others rich. *As poor*, says the Apostle, *yet making many rich, and as having nothing, and yet possessing all things*, 2 Cor. vi. 10. Here's the prerogative of Christian riches above all others. None can rob us of them, no poverty can lose them. *I know how to abound, and how to want*, says St. Paul, Phil. iv. 12. how to abound in the midst of want. They are riches, the riches of grace, that Thieves cannot steal, nor Moths corrupt, such as satiate the weary soul, such as make us with St. Paul in all estates to be content, count all riches, all joy, even the sorest and bitterest poverty or temptation. And when the riches of grace have heaped up our treasures here with all cheerfulness, then open they to us the treasures of glory, riches so far beyond what the world call so, that all here is but meer beggary, and want, and misery in comparison; not to be nam'd, or thought on.

The use of this is to instruct us henceforward to labour only for the true riches, to be rich in grace, to be plentiful in good works, not to squander away our days, like children in running after painted Butterflies, in heaping up Gold and Silver, as St. James speaks, to lie, and rust, and cry out against us not to build our dwellings, or fix our desires, or place our affections upon earthly rubbish, not to precount our lands, or houses, our clothes or furniture, our full bags, or our numerous stock and daily encrease, our riches; but to reckon Christ our riches, his Grace our wealth, his reproach our honour, his poverty our plenty, his glory the sum and crown of all our riches and glory. For if you know the *grace of the Lord Jesus Christ*, this you know also, that 'tis worth the seeking, that 'tis riches, and honour, and glory, how poor soever it look to the eye of the world. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is only that makes us rich, and poverty his way to enrich us by, contrary to the way of the world: and this ye know says the *Apostle*. 'Tis so plain and evident I need not tell you it, for ye know it. The third point the *evidence* of all that has been said.

3. *For ye know it*; for ye know nothing if you know not this. It was a thing not done in a corner: all the corners of the world rang of it, from the utmost corners of *Arabia* to the ends of the earth. The wise men came purposely from the *East* to see this poor little new-born Child, *& tibi serviet ultima Thule*, sang the *Poet*, the utmost confines of the *west* came in presently to serve him: the whole world is witness of it long ago. Nor were ever Christians ashamed either of this grace or poverty until of late. It was thought a thing worth knowing, worth keeping in remembrance by an *anniversary* too.

Indeed, were it not a thing well known, it would not be believed, that the Lord of all should become so poor as to have almost nothing of it all. But *we saw it*, says St. John i. 14. the *word made flesh*, this great high Lord made little, and low enough, *heard it, saw it with our eyes, looks upon it, and our hands too handled it*, 1 St. John i. 1. had all the evidence possibly could be had, the evidence of ear, and eye, and hand; know it by them all. And not we only, not St. John only, but all men know it. For *this grace of God that bringeth salvation*, that is, the true grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, *hath appeared unto all men*, says St. Paul, Titus ii. 11.

So

So that they either know it, or if they know it not, 'tis their own fault; for it has appeared, and has been often declared unto them; so that 'tis no wonder that the *Apostle* should tell the Corinthians that they know it, they could not be Christians without knowing it, nor it seems men in those days neither, that knew it not.

And yet as generally as it was known, it was a *grace* to know it, one of the most special gifts and graces, the knowledge of the grace of Christ. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that ye know it is his *grace*. You could not know it without it, none but they to whom it is given can know it as they should.

4. That we may know it so, as well as they; we are now in the last place to consider what the *Apostle* would infer upon us by it, what should be the issue of this knowledge: (1.) The *acknowledgment* of the grace: and then (2.) the *practice* of it. For ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet he so lov'd the poor as to bestow all his riches freely upon them, upon us that were poor, and naked, and miserable, and being thrust out of our first home, never since could find any certain dwelling-place. And therefore we (2.) after his example, being now enrich'd by him, should be rich in our mercy and bounty to the poor; for if his grace was such to us when we were poor, we should shew the like to the poor now we are rich.

But that we may be the readier to this, we must first be sensible of the other, throughly sensible of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledge it for a grace, a thing meerly of his own good will and favour, that he would thus become poor to make us rich. Know we and acknowledge *many* graces in this *one* grace.

A grace to our *humanity*, that he would grace it with putting on.

A grace to *poverty*, that he would wear that too.

A grace to our *persons* as well as to our natures, that it was for our sakes he did it.

A grace to our *condition*, that it was only to enrich it.

Know we then again and acknowledge it from hence.

1. That poverty is now become a grace, a grace to which the *Kingdom of God is promised*, St. Mat. v. 3. poverty of spirit. Nay, the poor, and vile, and base things too hath God chosen, saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 28. the poor are now elect, contrary quite to the fancy that the *Jews* had of them, whose proverb it was, *that the Spirit never descended upon the poor*; answerable to which it was then the cry, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth*, any Prophet or great good come out of so poor a place as that?

2. Know we again that Christ's poverty above all, or poverty for his sake is a grace indeed; for to you 'tis given, *given as a great gift of grace and honour to suffer for his name*, Phil. i. 29. And 'tis a part of our calling, says St. Peter, 1 S. Pet. ii. 21. a *specialty* of that grace.

3. Know we (3.) that our *Riches* are his *Grace* too. In vain we rise up early, and go late to bed; all our care, and pains, and labour is nothing to make us rich without his blessing. *The blessing of the Lord it is that maketh rich.*

4. Know we however these may prove, the riches of Christ can prove no other. All the vertues and graces of our souls, all the spiritual joy, fulness, and contentment are meerly his, they the proper *Grace* of the Lord Jesus Christ; no grace above them, no grace near them; nothing can render us so gracious in the eyes of God as they, they are above Gold, and Rubies, and precious Stones. These and all the rest being ac-
know-

knowledge in the Text, we may well acknowledge, that there was good reason to put an Article, an Emphasis upon *χάρις*, & *χάρις*, the grace.

Yet to make all up, all these graces, you must know all the several graces, outward and inward, come all from this one grace of Christ's *becoming poor*, being made man, and becoming one of us. To this it is we owe all we have or hope, to the Grace of Christ at Christmas; and therefore now are to add some practice to all this knowledge, to return some grace again for all this grace.

Gratia, is thanks, let's return that first; thank God and our Saviour for this grace of his, whence all grace flows, and for all the several graces as they at any time flow down upon us. *Gratia Deo*, thanks to God.

2. *Gratia* is *good will* and favour; let's shew that to others. *Good will towards men*.

3. But good will is not enough, *good works are graces*, let's study to encrease and abound, and to be rich in them.

4. Yet *Gratia* is in St. Paul's stile in this Chapter, *ver. 1.* and elsewhere, bounty and liberality to the poor; rich in this grace *especially* we are to be. 'Tis the peculiar grace of *Christmas*, hospitality and bounty to the poor. 'Tis the very grace St. Paul here provokes the *Corinthians* to, by the example of those of *Macedonia* and *Achaia*, *ver. 1.* who to their power and beyond their power, he bears them witness were not only willing to supply the necessities of the Saints, but even entreated him and them to take it. By the example (2.) of *Christ*, who both became himself poor, that we might be the more compassionate to the poor now he was in the number; and made us rich, that we might have wherewith to shew our compassion to them. Now surely if Christ be poor, and put himself among them, who would not give freely to them, seeing he may chance even to give to Christ himself among them when he gives? however, what is given to any of them he owns it as to himself, *S. Mat. xxv. 40. what ye do to any of the least of these my brethren, ye do it unto me.* And can any that pretends Christ be so wretchedly miserable as not to part with his money upon this score? Can any be so ungrateful as not to give him a little who gave them all? shall he become poor for our sakes, and we not shew our selves rich for his? it were too little in reason not to make our selves poor again for him, not to be as free to him as he to us. Yet he will be contented with a little for his all; that we should out of our abundance supply the want of his poor Members. He is gracious: Behold the grace of our Lord, I, in this too, in complying with our infirmities, not commanding us as he might, to impoverish our selves with acts of mercy, but to be only rich and abundant in them; to which yet he promises more grace still, the reward of glory. Come ye blessed of my Father, ye who supply and help my poor ones, come inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, where ye that have followed me in my poverty, or become poor for my sake, or have been rich in bounty to the poor, as it were to a kind of poverty, shall then reign with me amidst all the riches of eternal Glory.

THE EIGHTH SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

PsAL. viii. 4, 5.

1818

What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the Son of man that thou visitest him?

** Thou madest him † lower then the Angels * to crown him with glory and worship.*

** For
† A little
* And hast
crowned*



UT, Lord, what is man, or the Son of man that thou didst this day visit him? that thou this day crownedst him with that glory, didst him that honour? so we may begin to day; for 'tis a day of wonder, of glory and worship; to stand and wonder at Gods mercy to the sons of men, and return him glory and worship for it.

For, Lord, *what is man*, that the Son of God should become the Son of man to visit him? that God should make *him* lower then the Angels, who is so far above them, that he might crown *us*, who are so far below them, with glory and honour equal to them or above them? It was a strange mercy that God should make such a crum of dust as man to have dominion over the works of his own hands, that he should put all things in subjection under his feet; that he should make the *Heavens*, the *Moon*, and *Stars* for him; and the *Psalmist* might very well gaze and startle at it. But to make his *Son* such a thing of nought too, such a *Quid est*, that nobody can tell what it is, what to speak low enough to express it, such a *Novissimus hominum*, such an abject thing as man, such a cast-away as abject man, as the *most* abject man, bring him below *Angels*, below men, and then raise him up to Glory again, that he might raise up that vile thing called man together with him, and restore the Dominion when he had lost it; is so infinitely strange a mercy, that 'tis nearer to amazement than to wonder.

And indeed the *Prophet* here is in amaze, and knows not what to say: *Both* these mercies he saw here, but he saw not how to speak them. Gods mercy in mans Creation, and Gods mercy in mans Redemption too.

What

What God made man at first, and to what he exalted him when he had made him. What God made his *Son* for man at last, what he made him first and last, lower then the *Angels* first, higher then they at last, that he might shew the wonders of his mercy to poor man both first and last.

But if *David* did not see *both* in the words he spake, the *Apostle* did; for to *Christ* he applies them, *Heb. ii. 6, 7.* And that's authority good enough for us to do so, to bring it for a *Christmas* Text; especially *Christ* himself applying the second verse, *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength,* as spoken in relation to himself, *St. Matth. xxi. 16.* And that's authority somewhat stronger. Yet to omit nothing of Gods mercy, to do right on all hands to *Prophet* and *Apostle*, and *Christ* too, we shall take them in both senses. To refer them to man, the plain letter with the whole design and context of the *Psalms* is sufficient reason. To understand them yet of *Christ*, he himself and his *Apostle* will bear us out. And though the Text be full of wonder, it is no wonder that it has two senses; most of the old *Testament* and *Prophecies* have so, a lower and a higher, a literal and a more sublime sense. Thus *out of Egypt have I called my son*, *Hos. xi. i.* *Rachels weeping for her children*, *Jer. xxxi. 14.* *I have set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion*, *Psal. ii. 6.* all applied to *Christ* or his business, and affairs, and yet spoken first to other purposes, of *Israel* or *David*. I should lose time to collect more places. 'Tis better I should tell you the sum of this, that it is the *Prophet Davids* wonder at Gods dealing towards man, and his dealing towards *Christ*, that he should deal so highly mercifully towards man, and so highly strangely towards *Christ*; so mercifully with man as to remember him, to visit him, to make him but little lower then the *Angels*, and crown him with glory and worship. So strangely with *Christ*, as to make him a Son of man, and lower then the *Angels* first, then afterward to crown him with glory and worship: Things all to be highly wondered at. And the Text best to be divided, into Gods mercy, and Davids wonder.

I. Gods mercy manifested here in three particulars.

1. In his dealing with man. What is man? &c. In the literal sense of the words.

2. In his dealing with *Christ*, in respect to man. What is the Son of man?

3. In his dealing with man, in the sublimer sense of the Text, again in respect to *Christ*, what is man, and the Son of man? in the same sense too.

I. His mercy in his dealing with man will best appear (1.) by what he did: And (2.) for whom he did it; that he should do so much for man, that he should do it for so little; so little, so inconsiderable a thing as man.

Six branches there are here of what he did.

1. He was and is ever mindful of him. (2.) He visits him. (3.) He made him but a little lower then the *Angels*, but one step below. (4.) He did that only too to exalt him, to crown him, as we read it. (5.) He crown'd him also. (6.) He crown'd him with glory and with worship too.

If you will know (2.) for whom all this. 'Tis

1. For man. Adam, a piece of clay.

2. For the Son of man. Enos, a piece of misery.

3. For a meer quid est, for a thing we know not what to call it.

4. 'Tis for one that the *Prophet* wonders God should mind or think on, that he should come into Gods mind, much more into his eye to be visited by him: such a one that 'tis a wonder he should be thought on.

II. His dealing with *Christ* in respect to man, which is the *Apostles* interpretation-

terpretation of the words, is a second *manifesto* of his mercy, and shew'd

1. In his *Exinanition*, that God for mans sake should (1.) make him *lower then the Angels*. That (2.) he should make him so low as *man*. As *man* (3.) and the *Son of man*: Such a Son of man (4.) that we cannot know how to name him, such a *quid est*, such a we cannot tell what, a *wonder*, a *gazing-stock*, not worth seeing or remembring; and all only that man by him might be visited and remembred.

2. In his *Exaltation*. That notwithstanding all this, God should a while afterwards remember him, *visit him*, *crown him*, *crown him with glory and honour*.

III. And both *Exinanition* and *Exaltation* (3.) that he might yet *visit* man the more, remember him with greater mercies, crown him with richer graces, crown him with higher honours here then he did in the Creation, and with higher glory hereafter then the first nature could pretend to.

Upon all these, the *second general*, the *Prophets wonder* comes in well; will follow handsomely, as the conclusion of all, the *application* of all, to teach us to wonder and admire at all this mercy, and take up the Text and say it after *David*, What is man, Lord, what is man that thou, &c.

That we may wonder and worship too, and give God Glory and Worship for this wonderful mercy, for the glory and worship that he has given us: I begin now to shew you his mercy in all the acts here specified; and the first is, his being *mindful* of us, or *remembring* us.

1. And he remembers that *we are but dust*, Psal. ciii. 14. and so deals accordingly, blows not too hard upon us, lest he should blow us clean away: that's a good remembrance, to remember not to hurt us; and the Lord *hath been mindful of us*, says the *Psalmist* again, Psal. cxv. 12. hath and will ever be *mindful of his Covenant*, Psal. cxi. 5. though we too often forget *ours*, The *Bride may forget her ornaments*, Jer. ii. 32. and the *Mother her sucking child*, Isa. xlix. 15. Yet will not I (says God) forget you. The *Hebrew* here is in the *future*, as the *Latin* is in the *present*; but all times are alike with God; what he is, he will be to us; even when he seems to forget us, he is mindful of us. *Recordaris operationum ei*, says the *Chaldee*. Thou remembrest his works, to reward them; but that's too narrow. Thou remembrest *his substance*, all *his bones* and members, forgettest none, to preserve them. Thou remembrest his soul to speak comfortably to it. Thou remembrest his body to feed and clothe it. Thou remembrest his goings out and his comings in, to direct and prosper them. Thou remembrest his very tears, and puttest them up in bottles; *all these things are noted in his book*, Psal. cxxxix. 15. put down there. When we are shut up in the Ark, and all the Floods about us, then he remembers us as he did *Noah*, and in due time calls us out. When we are unhappily fall'n into *Sodom* among wicked hands, and the City ready to be all on fire about our ears, then he remembers us as he did *Lot*, nay, as he did *Abraham* rather when he delivered *Lot*, Gen. xix. 29. He is so good, that he remembers us for one another: remembers us for *Abrahams*, *Isaacs*, *Jacobs*, and *Dauids* sake: remembers the Son for the Father, the Nephew for the Uncle, the Friend for the Friends, *Jobs* friends for *Jobs* sake, Job xlii. 8. So mindful is God of us, so continually minding us, such a care of us he has, he careth for *all*; *no God like him for the care of all*, Wisd. xii. 13. I would *we* were as careful again to please him, as mindful of him.

2. And yet (2.) he is not only mindful of man, but *visits* him too. And *thy visitation*, says Holy *Job* has preserved my spirit, Job x. 12. Will

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you know what that is? *Thou hast granted me life and favour*; so the words run just before; not *life* only (for his being mindful of us says that sufficiently) but *favour* also: his visiting intimates some new favour, somewhat above life and safety.

Indeed *visiting* is sometimes *punishing*, *I will visit their sin*, Exod. xxxii. 24. And 'tis a mercy to man sometimes that God visits and punishes him; it keeps him from sin, increaseth him in grace, advances him in glory. And what is man that thou thus visitest him, O Lord, and sufferest him not to run headlong to destruction, though he so deserve it?

But *visiting* here (2.) is in a softer, *milder* way, 'tis to bestow some favour on us. Thus holy *Job*, in words somewhat like the Text, *what is man that thou shouldst magnifie him, and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him?* and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment, Job vii. 17, 18. So, Gods visiting in *Jobs* interpretation is a magnifying of man, a setting of his heart upon him to do him good, a visiting him with some mercy or other every morning, a purging and purifying him from tin and dross. In the Prophet *Jeremiah's* stile it is the *performing his good word* unto us, Jer. xxix. 10. And in the *Psalms*, a *Visiting with his salvation*, Psal. cvi. 4. Great mercy without question.

Hence it is that he *visits* us by his *Son*, to bring us to salvation. Thus good old *Zachariah* understood it; when he starts out as it were on a sudden with his *Benedictus*, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people*, S. Luke i. 68. He visits us when we are sick, and heals our *sicknesses*; he visits us in our sadness, and dispels our *sorrows*; he visits us in prison, and pays our *Debts*; he visits us in our dangers, and delivers us *out*; he visits us in our prosperities, and *rejoices* with us in them; he visits us by his Mercies, by his Prophets, by his Graces, by his Spirit: yet all these are nothing to this *visiting* by his *Son*, or little they are without it; or else they are all included in it: health and joy, liberty and deliverance, peace and mercy, comfort and instruction, grace and spirit, all in it; all in the coming down of Christ to visit us. How infinite is thy mercy that thou thus doest visit poor sinful man!

3. But thou wert infinitely merciful to him long before, when thou first madest him, when thou madest him but little lower than the Angels. (3.) *בְּעֶזְרִי* is some little thing, but not much. Thou gavest him understanding as thou didst them, only theirs is a little clearer, and without *discourse*. But *they* understand, and so does *man*. *They* have wills, and so has *he*. *They* are *spirits*, and he has *one*. *They* are Gods Ministers, and so is *man*; only they do all with more nimbleness and perfection; for they have no bodies but to hinder them, but man has. In *that* he is somewhat under them, yet not much neither, since *Christ* has so exalted our nature as to unite it to the Godhead, and made all his *Angels* worship it.

And which takes much too from this diminution, this *minuisti eum*, it is but *בְּעֶזְרִי* in a second sense for a little while, (for so 'tis possible to be rendred) whilst we live here, for a few years and days: It will not be long ere we be *יְוֹזְכֵּם* equal to the Angels we are now below, S. Luke xx. 36.

And yet we are a degree nearer to them now, if we expound the words that we render *Angels*, as S. *Jerome*, *Pagnin*, and some others do. The word is *Elohim*, one of the names of God; and St. *Chrysostom* found a Translation with *בְּעֶזְרִי* *מֵאֵל* *עִשְׂרִי*, he made us but a little lower than God himself. And may well seem so when he sets a *Dixi dii estis* upon us, Psal. lxxxii. 6. tells us that he said *we were Gods*, and the Children of the most High.

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4. But (4.) bear it what sense it will, what diminution it can, it is all but to exalt us by it, to crown us; thou hast made Christ to crown him, only to crown; so we read it in the old Translation: our very *diminutions* are sent us to augment our *glory*. So infinitely great is Gods mercy to us; that our very lessenings are for our greatning: A rare excess of mercy to make us *lower*, so to make us *higher*.

5. And 'tis high indeed when it exalts us to a *Crown*, and past doubting too, when it comes to a *coronasti*, thou hast done it, as 'tis here both in the old *Latin*, and the new *English*, certain to hold too, not to be one of those corruptible Crowns the *Apostle* speaks of, of *Bays* or *Laurel* in the *Olympick* games, 1 *Cor.* ix. If we add the other reading mentioned by St. *Chrysostome*, *Coronabis*, Thou shalt crown him; hast already, and shalt again, shalt *continue* crowning him. Here's a mercy will hold as well as stretch, as *everlasting* as 'tis *infinite*. Two senses there are of *Coronasti*, of this crowning; it may signifie either plenty, or reward. *Thou crownest the year with thy goodness*, Ps. lxxv. 11. *He crowneth thee with loving kindness*, Psal. ciii. 4. In both it signifies an abundance of mercies, and blessings. But he shall *receive a crown*, St. James i. 12. is the same with a high reward. In both senses God crowns man here, with the fulness of heaven and earth, gives him liberty to feed and clothe himself with what he pleases, keeps nothing of all his plenty from him; and which is more, gives him it as it were a reward for his labour, though it be vastly far above all his pains.

6. If this reward be *glory* now (6.) as here it is, he has put a crown of Gold indeed upon his head, as the *Psalmist* speaks. The glory to be made after the very image and likeness of God himself, and to be made so at a consultation with so much solemnity, that's the *glory* here. It was a kind of one to be made somewhat near the *Angels* likeness; but to have *Gods* added to it is, glory upon glory. What glory like Gods? what glory of man like that to be like God?

Having *honour* added to this glory, that all the creatures should do homage to him, the fiercest and stubbornest of them submit their necks under his feet, and the very crooked *Serpent* creeps away as afraid of him; none of them dare to lift him up a *head*, or a *horn*, a *paw* or *crest*, or *bite* against him; for the Fowls of the Air, and Fishes of the Sea, all of them to serve to his command and use, *what is man become now, what hast thou made him thus, O God?* Much of this glory I confess is now departed from him, or blurred, or sullied in him, that we can see little of his former purer rays, by reason of his own sin and folly; yet *thus* God made him, all this he did for him, and the *glimmerings* of all these glories and mercies are still upon him. And the mercy peradventure is the greater, though the glory be the less, in that notwithstanding all mans demerits, he yet continues in some degree or other all these mercies to him. You will see it still the greater if you now consider who it is all this is done to, who it is that God thus *remembers, visits, makes, and crowns* with glory and worship.

A worshipful piece God wot, a poor thing call'd *man*, stil'd *Adam* here, a piece of clay and dirt, *ex limo*, a pure clod, a meer walking pitcher, brittle, and dirty too; and the dirtier since his fall.

Miserable (2.) besides. *Enos* is a second word the *Psalmist* here expresses man withal; and that signifies a sad, sick, calamitous, miserable, incurable wretch; and which adds to it so by *descent* too, and by entail never here to be cut off: *Filius Enos*, the Son of man, the son of misery; he

comes crying into the world, as if he foresaw it, e're he well could see, and felt it at his first appearance. How innumerable are the *troubles*, how unavoidable the *necessities*, how incredible the *mischances*, how numberless the *sicknesses*, how unsupportable the *infirmities* that surround him from his first hour: infinite need there is that God should be mindful of him, that he should have some eye upon him, and regard him; for he comes in helpless into the world, and continues so if God help him not.

This is that then (3.) makes the *Prophet* come with a *quid est*, Lord what a thing is this? what a thing is man? a thing so *hidden* with infirmities, so *covered* with misfortunes, so *clouded* with griefs, so *compassed* with sorrows, so *wrapt* up in night and darkness, in sins and miseries, that one knows not what it is, or how to christen it.

Such a thing only we may conceive it, (and we cannot conceive half of its poornesses and emptinesses) that we can only gape and wonder at it. In the 144. Psalm, where the *Psalmist* propounds this question as it were again of *what is man*? He answers presently, *ver. 4. Man is like a thing of nought, his time passeth away like a shadow.* He is not so much as a thing; he is but like it, though that very thing be a thing of *nought* too; a meer shadow of a thing of *nought* he is, which we may well wonder at, but cannot well imagine, and wonder again that God should think of such a shadow as he, that he should be mindful of the dust of the earth, that he should regard the dirt, that he should visit a we know not *what*, that he should raise a piece of clay so near Angels and himself, that he should crown such a dunghil of wretchedness and misery, that he should bestow his glory upon such a shadow, and worship upon the dust of his feet, and the dirt under him. *O Lord how wonderful is thy goodness towards the children of men!*

'Tis more wonderful for all that, if we now consider his dealing with his *own Son*, for the sakes of the Sons of *men*. The second particular of his mercy, that for man and the Sons of men he has made this Text to be said of *him* also, made him a thing to be wondred at, by his dealing with him both by his *Exinanition* and by his *Exaltation*. To him now we come to apply the words, for to *him* they properly belong. Where first we will find out his *Exinanition*, or his being emptied and abased, to be wondred at.

What is *man*? so only before; but what is now the *best* of men, the *Son* of man himself? The term of *Son* of *man* is very proper unto *Christ*; called so by *Daniel* long before he was so, *Dan. vii. 13.* And it may bear a note, that *Christ*, he only is properly *filius hominis* in the singular, the Son of man single, born of the Virgin without a man. Others are *fili hominum* in the plural: every one is so, born by the help of two, Father and Mother both. But notwithstanding man, and the Son of man are diminutions to the Son of God; for to have been made like Angels had been a high derogation; but lower then *they*, what shall I call it?

But (2.) So low as man, can you lend me a word for it? for *what is man*, that God should be made *one*? I have told you over and over what he is, but what art thou O blessed God that thou should'st be made such a thing as he?

Or (3.) if man he must be made, what need he be made the *Son* of *man* yet? He might have brought a humane nature down from heaven, that had been fittest for him: an incorruptible humanity. To be man and the Son of man, rottenness of rottenness, vanity of vanity (for man in the *Psalmist's* phrase is nothing else) there's a *debasement* below *debasement*.

And

And yet (4.) to be such a Son of man, that has a *quid est*, a *si quis* writ over him, to enquire who he is, so obscure and ignoble that neither *David* nor *Esau* can discern him; but *Esau* with a *quis est*, *Isa.* lxiii. 1. and *David* here with a *quid est* only can decipher him; without *form* or *comeliness*, form or fashion, or name, or title, one despised and rejected even of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs, one that men would hide their faces from, as the Prophet speaks of him, *Isa.* liii. 2, 3. to be made such a one as this; we may all wonder indeed, Prophets and People, all of us, nay, be all amazed at it.

I can shew you him yet lower, (5.) Lower than the Angels, that we have told you; but they were good ones: but *malis etiam*, so *S. Austin*, lower than the bad ones: Laid under their cruelty and fury in his death, and not over them surely always in his life. When the Devil was permitted to carry him from Mountain to Mountain, to the Pinacle of the Temple, or where he pleases, *St. Mat.* iv. This is stranger still.

Yet this might be a glory, as a trial: but (6.) to be visited, that is punished, and not after the visitation of all men neither, but even the basest, to be a man raised up for punishment, made to be scourged, afflicted, and abus'd, *A homo quoniam visitas*, made man only to be punished; the Son of man only to be under the power and lash of man, the worst of men too, the basest of the people, scorn'd and spit upon, beaten and buffeted, torn, and rent, and lash'd, and pierc'd by who would of them: What wonder is there not in his *thus* being made the Son of man?

But lastly to be as it were out of *Gods* mind the while, so visited by him, as if he were no way mindful of him, as if he had clean forgotten him, who he was, remembred not at all that he was his Son he us'd so, that he was forc'd to cry, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* art no more mindful of me? This is a *quid est*, beyond the very Text, a wonder that is above what is explicate there. Yet such a man he was made too; so that we may justly now ask, *quid est*, in the highest key, what is man? what is *this* man? what is the business, what the matter that all this is done unto him? that God thus makes and unmakes him, and makes him again we know not what.

And we should more wonder yet, but for the following words (2.) that all this is but to crown him with glory, and honour. But that affords us a new wonder still, that God should so crown such a one as this *he* we speak of. And to speak truth, his exaltation after all this, the exaltation of our humane nature in him, as poor, wretched, and contemptible as it is, a new work of wonder.

Had it been a nature born and fram'd to glory, it had been none at all; had it been a King, or of the Royal Lineage to have been crown'd, there had been no strangeness in it: but to crown a worm, to crown the very scorn of men, as he terms himself, *Psal.* xxii. 6. with glory, and the out-cast of the people with honour and worship, this is a *quis enarrabit*, who can declare this generation; how it should come to a crown?

Yet before we come to speak of that, let's go through the lower parts of his exaltation: And as poor a thing as God made him (and that was poor enough) yet did he not forget him. He was so mindful of him even in his low estate, that he gave his Angels charge over him, would not let his foot slip, or dash against a stone, would not suffer a bone of him to be broken, or one tittle of his Covenant to fail him; sent his Angels too to look after, to minister to him; a whole host of them to declare him this day to the world.

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Nay, (2.) came and visited him *himself*, he and his Holy Spirit with him at his *Baptism*, he and *Moses*, and *Elias* with him in the Mount, where he gave testimony he was his Son, his *beloved Son*, in whom he was well pleased.

Nay, (3.) that which might seem in one sort a diminution, was in another an exaltation: he made him but a *little lower than the Angels*, was an exalting him, when it made even his *Body* little inferior to their *Spirit*; and that it did, when he could pass through a crowd of people as invisible as an immaterial Spirit, S. Luke iv. 30. Nay, before that, when he came into the world without any blemish to his Mothers Virginity; as if he had been a *Spirit*, not a *Body*: and after that, when he arose out of his Tomb, the stone upon it, when he entered and the doors were shut, when he vanished out of sight, &c. they knew not how he went. *Paulo minus angelis* indeed: this is little less than Angels I can tell you. But St. *Austin* tells you more, *Natura humanâ Christi Deum solum majorem*, That God only is greater than Christs humane nature. The *Hypostatical* union to the Deity has made it so; and those infinite graces of his soul are somewhat more than *paulo minus*, above the Angels rarest endowments.

Yet this is nothing to the *Crown* that follows; for we see *Jesus*; says the Apostle, Heb. ii. 9. *who was made a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour.* Παρ' ἀγγέλους ὀξὴ καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφανώσας, so *Enthymius* thinks it may be read without a comma, above the Angels with glory and honour hast thou crowned him, with a glory beyond theirs. Indeed four Crowns he was crowned with, a Crown of *Flesh*, with that his Mother crown'd him in his Incarnation, Cant. iii. 11. A Crown of *Thorns*, with that the Souldiers crown'd him at his Passion, St. *John* xix. 2. A Crown of *Precious Stones*, *De lapide pretioso*, at his Resurrection: The four endowments of glorious Bodies, *Charity*, *Agility*, *Impossibility*, and *Incorruptibility*, were the Stones of it. And a Crown of pure Gold at his Ascension, when he shone like the Son in *gloria*, and went up *cum corona*, with a crown or ring of blessed Saints, into the highest Heavens. With these two last God crowned him, these two were his exaltation, and the crown or reward of the two other.

And to make this Crown the more glistering and glorious, here's *honour* added to it, *A name given him above every name*, that at the mention of it every knee is now to bow, both of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth, Phil. ii. 9, 10. made better than the Angels, Heb. i. 4. so much better that all things, even the Angels themselves, *Authorities and Powers*, all sorts of Angels are made subject unto him, 1 S. Pet. iii. 22. and are therefore bid all to worship him, says St. Paul, Heb. i. 6. Such honour has *Christ* after his humiliation; and we may expect some after ours: If we humble our selves, we also shall be exalted, and crowned with glory. And so it seems we are entitled to it by the sufferings of the Son of man, and by his visiting us, our glory is much increased by his Glory, our honour higher by his Redemption, then in our first Creation; so that we may now well take up the words again, and pronounce them with greater astonishment still, that he should so remember, visit, and crown his redeemed people as he does.

For what is man indeed that God should redeem him at so great a price? what access can it be to God to raise him out of his ruins? might he not more easily have made a new stock of men of better natures, than have redeemed *Adam's*?

Or (2.) if he would have needs so much magnified his love as to have
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redeem'd him, because he had made him; would not a restoring of him to his *first* estate have been well enough, but that he must raise him to a *higher*? Without doubt it had, but that God in mercy thinks nothing too much for him.

It appears so by his remembering him. Man was a true *Enos*, and that is *obliviscens*, a forgetful piece; yet God remembers him, and comes down in the evening of his fall, a few minutes after it, and raises him up with a promise of the seed of the Woman, to set all straight again. There he did as well visit as remember him.

And in the pursuance of this singular mercy, he still (2.) visits him every morning, morning and evening too; visits by his *Angels*, by his *Priests*, by his *Prophets*, by his *Mercies*, by his *Judgments*, by his *Son*, by his *Holy Spirit*, by daily *motions*, and inspirations. These are the visits he hourly makes us since he visited us by his Son; far more plentifully than before; more abundant grace, more gracious visits; for if his Son be once formed in us, he will never give over visiting till he crown us.

Yet (3.) by degrees he raises us up to some Angelical purities and perfections before he crown us: our nature is much elevated by the Grace of Christ; and what the *Jew* did only to the outward letter, we are enabled to do to the Spirit of it, to inward purity as well as the outward. Thus and thus you heard of old, says Christ, *S. Matth. v. 21.* but I say more, not a wanton *look*, not a murderous *thought*, not a reproachful *word*, not the *slightest* Oath. He would refine us fain somewhat near the Angels, to be pure as they.

But (4.) we shall not do it *gratis*; he will crown us for it, quicken us together with Christ, raise us up together, and make us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, *Eph. ii. 5, 6.* Honours us with the name of *friends*, reveals himself unto us, fills us with the riches of Christ, adopts us to be his Sons, makes us members of Christ, partakers of his Spirit, makes himself one with us, and we with him; washes us by one *Sacrament*, feeds us by another; comforts us by his word, compasses with the ministrations of righteousness that exceeds in glory; pardons our sins, heals our infirmities, strengthens our weaknesses, replenishes us with graces, urges us with favours, makes us with open face behold them as in a glass, behold the glory of the Lord, and changes us at last into the same image from glory to glory, *Eph. iii. 18.* What is man, O Lord, or the Son of man that thou shouldst do thus unto him? And what are we, O Lord, what are we that we are so insensible of thy mercies? what base, vile, unworthy things are we, if we do not now pour out our selves in thanks and wonder, in praise and glory for this exceeding glory!

Wonder we (1.) stand we and wonder, or cast our selves upon the earth, upon our faces, in amazement at it, that God should do all this for us; thus remember, thus visit, thus crown such things as we. That (2.) he should pass by the *Angels* to crown us, leave them in their sins and misery, and lift us out of ours. That (3.) he should not take their nature at the least, and honour those that stood among them, but take up ours, and wear it into heaven, and seat it there.

And there is a visit he is now coming to day to make us, as much to be wondred at as any, that he should feed us with his *Body*, and yet that be in Heaven; that he should cheer us with his *Blood*, and yet that shed so long ago: that he should set his *Throne*, and keep his *Table* and presence upon the Earth, and yet Heaven his *Throne*, and Earth his *Foot-stool*: that he should here pose all our understandings with his mysterious work,
and

and so many ages of Christians after so many years of study and assistance of the Spirit, not yet be able to understand it. *what is man*, or the *Son of man*, O *Blessed Jesu*, that thou shouldst thus also visit and confound him with the wonders of thy mercy and goodness!

Here also is *glory* and *honour* too, to be admitted to his Table; no where so great; to be made one with him; as the meat is with the body: no glory like it. Here is the crown of plenty, fulness of pardon, grace, and heavenly Benediction. Here's the crown of glory, nothing but rays, and beauties, lustres and glories to be seen in *Christ*, and darted from him into pious souls. Come take your crowns, come compass your selves with those eternal circlings.

Take now the *cup of salvation*, and remember God for so remembering you: call upon the name of the Lord, and give glory to your God. If you cannot speak out fully (as who can speak in such amazements as these thoughts may seriously work in us) cast your selves down in silence, and utter out your souls in these or the like broken speeches. *what is man, Lord what is man? what am I? How poor a thing am I? How good art thou? what hast thou done unto him? How great things? what glory, what honour, what crown hast thou reserved for me? what shall I say? How shall I sufficiently admire? what shall I do again unto thee?*

What shalt thou do? Why (1.) if God is so mindful of us men, Let us be mindful of him again; remember he is always with us, and do all things as if we remembered that so he were.

2. Is he so mindful of us? Let us be mindful of our *selves*, and remember *what* we are, that we may be humbled at it.

3. Does he remember *us*? Let us then again remember *him* with our prayers and services.

2. Has he visited us? Let us in thankfulness visit him again, visit him in his *Temple*, visit him at his *Table*, visit him in his *poor* members, the sick, the imprisoned.

3. Has he made us lower then the Angels? Let us make our selves lower and lower still in our own sights. Is it yet but a *little* lower then the Angels? Let us raise up thoughts, and pieties, and devotions to be *equal* with them.

4. Has he *crown'd* us with glory? Let us crown his *Altars* then with offerings, and his *name* with praise; let us be often in *corona*, in the congregation of them that praise him, among such as keep *Holy-day*. Let us crown his *Courts* with beauty, crown our *selves* with good works; they should be our glory, and our crown: And for the worship that he crowns us with too, let us worship and give him honour, so remember, so visit, so crown him again; so shall he, as he has already, so shall still remember us last, and bring us to his own palace, there to visit him face to face, where he shall make us equal to the Angels we are now below, and crown us with an incorruptible crown of glory: through *Christ*, &c.

THE NINTH SERMON ON Christmas-Day.

S. LUKE ii. 30, 31, 32.

For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.

A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.



Salvation cannot but be a welcome then at any time. I know no day amiss. But in *Die salutis*, at such a time as this, on *Christmas-day* especially. Then it first came down to bless this lower world.

But salvation so high as to be *seen* is more; much more if we our selves have any interest in it, if it be for the *Gentiles* too, that *we* also may come in. Far more, if it be such salvation, that our friends also may be saved with us, none perish: if it be *omnium populorum*, to 'um all in whatsoever Nation.

Add yet, if it be salvation by *light*, not in the night, no obscure deliverance, we like that better; and if it be to be saved not by running away, but gloriously: Salvation with *Glory*, that's better still. Nay, if it be *all*, salvation on a *day* of salvation, not afar off, but within *ken*, not heard of, but *seen*, to us and ours, an *universal* salvation, a glad some, a light some, a notable, a glorious salvation, as it is without contradiction, *Verbum Evangelii*, good Gospel, joyful tidings, so it must needs be, *verbum diei* too, the happiest news in the most happy time.

These make the Text near enough the *day*; and yet 'tis nearer. What say you if this salvation prove to be a *Saviour*, and that Saviour *Christ*, and that *Christ* new born, the first time that *viderunt oculi* could be said of him, no time so proper as *Christmas* to speak of *Christ* the Saviour, born and sent into the world. He it is, that is here stiled *salutare tuum*. *Christ*, that blessed sight that restores *Simeons* decaying eyes to their youthful lustre, that happy burthen, that makes *Simeon* grasp heaven before he enter it.

Indeed the good old man begins not *his* Christmas till Candlemas:

S

'Twas

'Twas not Christmas-day with him, he did not see his Saviour till he was presented in the Temple. The Feast of Purification was his Christmas. *This* the Shepherds, the worlds, and *ours*. This day first he was seen visibly to the world.

Being then to speak of salvation, which is a Saviour, or a Saviour who is salvation. (1.) First of the *Salvation* it self, τὸ σωτήριον. (2.) Then of its *certainly*, and manifestation; so plain and evident that the eye may see it: Salvation to be *seen*. More (2.) prepared to be seen. (3.) Of the *universality*, before the face of all people. (4.) Of the *Benefits*. They are two. (1.) A *light*. (2.) A *glory*, with the twofold parties. (1.) The *Gentiles*. (2.) The *Jews*. Of each both severally and jointly.

When we have done with the salvation, then of the other sense of τὸ σωτήριον, the *Saviour* himself, that's the prime meaning of *salutare* here. (1.) Of his *natures*, in ὧς his *Godhead*, in εἶδον and ἑπὶ τῆς αἰσθητικῆς his *manhood*. (2.) the *unity* of his person in τὸ σωτήριον (3.) His *Offices* in ἑθρῶν, ἀποδείκνυσθαι and ἀδελφῶν. His *eternal* generation in ὧς, his *temporal* in κατὰ σαρκα.

Lastly, of our way to *behold* him, and our *duty* when we see him. How to obtain this glorious sight of τὸ σωτήριον, of salvation, and how to entertain it. Of which that I may speak with reverence, and you hear with profit, Let us pray, &c.

I begin with that which we all desire and hope to end, *Salvation*; and first with τὸ σωτήριον (give me leave to do so) in the sense of *Trophane* Authors. It will fit the day, τὰ σωτήρια were *dies salutare*, Festivals for some famous deliverances among them. And may not τὸ σωτήριον then, be this great Festival of the *Nativity* of Salvation, this happy day which come about by the circling of the year, expects now the solemnities of our joys and thanksgivings? You see the *day* it self is in the Text; and now we have seen *that*, let's look into the occasion of it, what 'tis that makes it *Holy-day*.

Something seen or done upon it, what's that? *Salutare tuum*, says the Text; a Saviour seen and a salvation wrought; nay, this seen too, for *viderunt oculi* to both, if they be two. There is but one word for both, and it may be they may be but one. However distinguish them we will for a while, though we unite them in the upshot.

Salvation. *Simeon* might with as much ease have call'd him *Saviour*; but that he thought too little. You would have blam'd his eye-sight had he seen no more. *Saviours* there have been many. *Moses*, and *Joshua*, and *Jephtha*, and *Samson*. I cannot tell you how many, and they have brought salvation in their times and sav'd their people; but none of all was ever made salvation but this day's Saviour, who is made unto us *righteousness and salvation*.

Made to us; is that all? nay, is it in himself. Other Saviours when they have saved others, themselves they could not save. They themselves did still stand in need of being sav'd. *Christ* needs none other but himself. He is *Salvation*, no Saviour so but *he*.

And τὸ σωτήριον it is, not ἡ σωτηρία, nor ἡ σωτηρία neither. Salvation neither for male only, nor female only, but both of the *Neuter gender*. *Neither male, nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus*.

2. Not ἡ σωτηρία in the Feminine, not a weak Feminine Salvation, but a strong firm one, the *mighty strength of his right hand*.

3. Not a Feminine Salvation, not ἡ σωτηρία, lest we should fondly look for ἡ Μαρία the *Virgin Mother*. Not *she*, but the *Virgins Son*: the Holy Ghost, as I may say, afraid of *Salvatrix mea*, *Salve Redemptrix* before ever Christianity dreamt of that Sacrilege.

But

But *Τὸ σωτήριον* is yet more salvation with an Emphasis, with an Article, *This* Salvation. Many Saviours and Salvations too without doubt had aged *Simeon* seen in the large circuit of his years without a *Nunc dimittis*; but no sooner *Τὸ σωτήριον*, no sooner *this*, but he grows weary of the world; his life grows tedious to him, he would be going. What means this hastening to his Grave, when he folds salvation in his arms? Why, this it is that gives it a pre-eminence above all beside. Death now it self is conquer'd, and *now first* to die is to be saved. Salvation not only from Death, but from the *terrors* of it.

Salvation is a deliverance, a deliverance is from some evil of sin or punishment. To be deliver'd from punishment, be it but the loss of goods, of liberty, or health, is a kind of Salvation; and if the loss be great we are deliver'd from, the salvation great: but if the punishment stretch it self beyond the limits of fading time, if it be to be extended through eternity, the deliverance then great without question, well deserves the Article *Τὸ σωτήριον*.

To be deliver'd from punishment and eternal punishment is no small matter beyond all humane power: yet from sin is far beyond it. If we be not sav'd from *that*, 'tis but an incomplete, a partial salvation from the other.

Σωτήριον comes from *σώω* or *σῶζω* *salvum facere*, to make all whole again, to heal the wounds of sin by the plasters of mercy; to restore a man to his lost health, his lapsed justice, *σὺν πλείν integrum facere*, to give him health. *Thy saving health, O Lord. Adam* lost it, in him *we* all, and every day we lose it still. We confess as much morning and evening. *There is no health in us.*

And what is it we gain then by *τὸ σωτήριον* if we so soon are at a loss? yes *σῶζειν* is *salvum conservare* too, to keep us well when we are so. Good God, in what need stand we of *thy* salvation! We sin, we are punisht, we are freed, we rise again, we slip, and fail, and fall again, to deliver us; to restore us, to preserve us as it requires, so it makes, *τὸ σωτήριον* an *emphatical*, an exceeding great salvation.

Nor is this all; *τὸ σωτήριον* *οὐ* *Thy* salvation; from sickness, or imprisonment, or poverty, or death, man may sometime save us; yet not so, but that it is *σωτήριον* *οὐ*. *Gods* too. God by man. But deliver us from the lowest prisons, from a Hell of miseries, sin and its attendants, and keep us upright and entire, 'tis only *God-man* can do it. That's *Gods* peculiar *τὸ σωτήριον* *οὐ*, *His* wonderful salvation.

His by propriety. It had no other power but the strength of his own right arm to bring this mighty thing to pass. It had no other motive then his own immense love and goodness to effect it. We were in no case to deserve it, profest enemies, we, had nothing in us to make it *ours*, but that it might be wholly *his*. *Thy* salvation.

Yet *thy* salvation? why so? What, can God be saved? *Thy* salvation! *our* salvation rather: yes both. Thine *actively*, ours *passively*. *Thou* savest, *we* saved.

And may it not be *His* passively too? *Thy* salvation. Thou thy self saved. Thy *Promises*, thy *Truth*, which is thy self; thy *Mercy*, which is thy self; thy *Justice*, which is thy self, sav'd from the censure of unjust man, by preparing him a Saviour. Man had almost thought *God* had broke his word: now *that's* sav'd. Some still will not let his mercy be sav'd, but destroy it with justice, and in destroying that turn justice into *gall and wormwood*; ruine *that* too by denying *πάντων* *ἀνθρώπων*, an universal Saviour. It

was time, high time to tell us from Heaven by the mouth of the Holy Spirit of *σωτηριαν* *οὐ*. God himself now quitted of injustice, and want of bowels of compassion.

You have a witness of it undeniable. *Ἰδεν* *οἱ* *ὀφθαλμοί* *μου*, my eyes have seen it. Salvation clear even to the sense, and to the certain'st, the *sight*. The eye may see it.

2. *Viderunt oculi*, he might have added *et contractaverunt manus mea*, and his hands handled it; but if the eye see it, we need not sue to the hand for certainty.

Οἱ ὀφθαλμοί these eyes. No longer now the eyes of Prophecie, those are grown dim, and almost out. *Isaiah* indeed could say *is born, is given*, so certain was he of it; but never *viderunt oculi*, for all that, *he* never liv'd to see it; one degree, *this*, above the infallibility of Prophecie.

Time was when this *salutare tuum* was enveloped in clouds: It was so till this day came, a mystery kept secret since the world began; lockt up in Heaven so close, that *mine eyes have wasted away with looking for thy saving health*, O Lord, sighs *David*, and the Church answers him with *Utinam disrumperes cœlos, Break the Heavens, O Lord, and come down: O utinam, O would thou wouldst!* But now, as we have *heard*, so have we *seen* thy salvation.

Nor need we any extraordinary piercing eye to see it: so plain and manifest is the object, that eyes almost sunk into their holes, eyes over which the curtains of a long night are well nigh drawn, eyes veiled with the mists of age, eyes well near worn out with looking and expectation, the dimmest, aged'st sight may see it. *Mine eyes*, old Father *Simeons*.

Nor need the *Manichee* strain his eye-sight to discern it. He need not, as is usual when we look on curious pieces, close one eye, that the *visual* spirits being contracted we may see those things which else by reason of their curious subtilty scape the seeing. 'Tis no such airy phantasm, but that we may with open face and eyes behold it; he may see it with *οἱ ὀφθαλμοί* both his eyes, without straining, without that trouble.

But if our senses should play false with us, yet *my eyes*, the eyes of a Prophet, a holy man inspir'd and detain'd a prisoner in the flesh on purpose for this spectacle, cannot possibly deceive us.

Especially if you add but *ἰδεν* to *ὀφθαλμοί* *μου*. That he did not perceive it only as afar off, *Balaams* sight, or had a glance or glimmering of it only, but, *ἰδεν*, *saw it plain*, so plain, as *ἰδεν* to *know* it too. Saw it in his arms and lookt near it, nay into it, by the quick lively eye of a firm faith; for with both eyes he saw it, the eyes of his body, and the eyes of his soul; the *Saviour* with the one, *Salvation* with the other: the child with those, the *God* with these. And what greater evidence then that of sight, what greater certainty then that of faith!

If all this be yet too little, if *viderunt* be to seek, and *oculi* fail, and *mei* be deceived; yet *parasti* cannot but lift it above the weakness of probability, put all out of question. It was not only seen, but *prepared* to be seen.

It came not, as the world thinks of other salvations, by chance, but was prepared. *Parasti, Thou* hast prepared it, prepared by him that prepared the world.

Higher yet, *parasti* thou *hast* prepared; done it long since: the preparation began not now, had a higher beginning, a beginning *before* the face of all people, before the face of any people, before the face of the waters, before the face of the world appeared. *Chosen us in him*, says St.

Paul,

Paul, then chosen and prepared him for us, *before the foundation of the world*, Ephes. i. 4.

But this *paraſti* is not the blessing of this day. *Paraſti ab æterno*, ſo to the *Patriarchs* too; but *in conſpectu* before our faces, made ma-niſeſt in theſe laſt times, maniſeſt in the fleſh, *that's* the blessing we this day commemorate. *A body thou haſt prepared me*, that *prepared*, then *lo I come*, he will be born preſently, Christmas out of hand. *Paraſti* now compleat, this day he was firſt made ready and dreſt in ſwadling-clothes.

And *prepared*. So it came not at mans entreaty, or deſert. Nay when he thought not of it. When *Adam* was running away to hide himſelf, then the promiſe of the womans ſeed ſtept in between; and when Religion and Devotion lay at the laſt gasp ready to bid the world adieu, then comes he himſelf who had been ſo long preparing, and fulfilled the promiſe. This a degree of certainty higher then our imaginations can follow it, that relies wholly on Gods own *paraſti*, without mans uncertain preparation.

Yet ſomething ado there was to bring this *τι οὐκ ἐκείνῳ* to *ἕλθῃ*, this *ſalvation* to be ſeen. A long preparation there was of *Patriarchs*. *Moses* and the *Prophets*, of Promiſes, Types, and Figures, and Propheſies for the ſpace of four thouſand years. This long train led the triumph, then comes the Saviour, then *Salvation*. Sure and certain it muſt needs be, to which there are ſo many agreeing witneſſes.

This then ſo variously *typified*, ſo many ways *ſhadowed*, ſo often *promiſed*, ſo clearly *propheſied*, ſo conſtantly, ſo fully *teſtified*, ſo long *expected*, ſo earneſtly *deſired*. This is the *Salvation* prepared for us. Whoever looks for any other may look his eyes out, ſhall never ſee it. This *Name* the only *Name* by which we ſhall be ſaved, the *Name* of *Jeſus*.

Yet notwithstanding all that's ſaid or can be ſaid, 'tis but *paraſti* ſtill. 'Tis not *poſuiſti*, prepared for all, not *put*, ſet up for all, as if all ſhould be ſaved. No, *poſui te in caſum*, ſet for the fall of many, thoſe that will not turn their eyes up hither, that care not for *viderunt*, neglect this fight, ſlight this ſalvation. But however this diſmal ſucceſs often comes about, *Paraſti* it is, that cannot be loſt, and in *conſpectu omnium populorum*, for all it is prepared, for all in general; none excluded this *paraſti*, he that put *paraſti* into this good Fathers mouth, put in *omnium populorum* too. Not only the *certainty*, but the *univerſality* of this ſalvation, that's the *third* part of the Text, and thither are we come. *Before the face of all people*.

Prepared, that's a favour, and for the *people*, that's an ample one, and one ſtep to an univerſal. *People* are men, a great company of men, and for men, and a multitude of men it is prepared, *nusquam Angelos*, not for Angels, in no wiſe for them, not one of them. No they are ſtill the Sons of *darkneſs*, *no day-ſpring* from on high to viſit them.

For men, and not for the better or more honourable part of men alone, but for the *people* too, the *meanest* ſinfulleſt men in more favour with God then the Apoſtate Angels.

And not to ſome few of thoſe people neither, but to all the people, the *whole* people.

But in *conſpectu totius populi* it might be, for all one people, and the reſt ne're a whit the nearer to ſalvation; the further off rather when it is ſo reſtrain'd, *uniuscuiusque populi*, would be better for all the people of the world.

'Tis ſomewhat near the height, that of what we can deſire; yet *om-nium*

nium populorum, 'tis we need for all people whatsoever, not only all that then were, but all before up to *Abraham*, up to *Adam*, and all since down to us that live this day, down to all that shall survive us as long as there shall be people upon earth. *Uniuscujusque populi* had been enough for the whole world then alive. *Omnium populorum* it must be, or the Fathers before, and we since are men most miserable.

But do not *Simeons* old eyes deceive him? *πάντων*? what *πάντων*? for all? I know some quicker sights, some younger eyes that can construe *παντες* into *pauci*, can see no such matter. It may be *δεξαν λαὸν Ἰσραὴλ*, the glory of the *elect Israel* at the end of the Text dims their weak eyes, or peradventure like men overwhelm'd with the news of some unexpected fortune, they think themselves in a dream, and dare not give credit to their eyes though they behold it; so great and undeserv'd a blessing, that 'tis a labour to perswade 'um that they see it, though they *cannot but* see it. *Simeons* eyes are old enough to ponder objects, he knows what he sees, and he speaks what he knows, and he speaks no more then the Angel before told the Shepherds, *gaudium quod erit omni populo*, tidings of joy which shall be to all people, *erit*, shall be for ever.

And say not the *Apostles* the same also? *The Saviour of all men*, says St. Paul, 1 Tim. iv. 10. *pecially of them that believe*, of them *especially*, not them only. *Who will have all men to be saved*, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. ii. 4. *The Saviour of the world*, St. John iv. 14. *A ransom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. *God not willing that any perish*, not any, 2 St. Peter iii. 9.

Nay, God himself says more, *Ezek. xxxiii. 11. I will not the death, no not of the wicked*, not of a sinner. Much less his death before he be or man or sinner. That's no kin to *salutare tuum*, that's not salvation, but destruction prepar'd. And 'tis not *nollem*, I would fain not have it so, but plain *nolo*, I will not; or more to the word, I *not will it*, I deny it utterly, *Thy destruction is from thy self*, 'tis none of my doings. *Salutare meum*, I will the contrary. To put all out of question, take his oath, *Vivo ego*, as I live I do not.

And accordingly does the *Saviour* himself send out his general proclamation, St. Mat. xi. 28. *Come to me all that are heavy laden*, and who is not? yet do but come, come who will, and I will ease. He calls 'um all, by that grace they may come if they will, except you think he mocks 'um: when they are come *He will refresh them*.

To take away all plea of ignorance or excuse, we proceed further, *In conspectu omnium*; not only prepared for all, but *in the sight of all*, before their faces. So prepar'd that they may see, and know it, know it to be prepar'd; not that it might be, and is not, as if indeed the salvation were sufficient in it self; but *God* would not suffer it to be so. So though universal, yet so hidden under obscure and nice distinctions, that few can see it; but withal so evident, that all may see it, *in conspectu omnium*, none with good reason deny it.

Had it been *ἐνώπιον πάντων*, they might have had some pretence and colour if they had not seen it: had it been only *in sight*; many things are so, which we oft-times do not see. But *κατὰ πρόσωπον*, that which is just before our faces, we must be blind if we see not *that*.

If for all this, they close their eyes and will not see, then *κατὰ* is *contra* against 'um to confute, to confound their vain imaginations. So *κατὰ πρόσωπον* will be against those that cry out *the light of righteousness rose not upon us*, to prove the contrary now, *κατὰ πρόσωπον* to their faces.

There is no idle word in Scripture; every *Adverb* and *Preposition*, and Article

Article the dictate of the *Spirit*. There are other words he might have used, ἡ ὁμιλία ἡμετέριον, many more, but κατὰ πρόσωπον methinks on purpose.

1. It may be (besides what has been said) to distinguish the *Jews* and *Us*, since this salvation came. Κατὰ πρόσωπον before *our* faces. When the light's before, the shadows are behind. So it is with us ever since the Sun of Righteousness arose this day, since this light of Salvation left the clouds. When the light's behind, the shadows are before: So to the Jewish Synagogue. Salvation *behind* the cloud to them. Nothing before their eyes but veils and shadows; nothing else took up their eye-sight, *but we with open face behold the glory of the Lord.*

2. Or may it not be κατὰ πρόσωπον against the face of the world, *clean contrary*. That's for nothing but glory and pomp; God works not as man works; but κατὰ ὕψος against the *hair*, will have an humble Saviour, lowly born, of poor Parentage, in a Stable, wrapt in Rags, laid in a Manger; no Royal Cradle, no Princely Palace, without Attendants, without State. The *Angels* themselves at such a sight as this could not but προσκυνῶν, bow down, and look, and look again, and mistrust their eye-sight to see *God* in a Cratch, *Heaven* in a Stable: and bow down we must our high towering thoughts, and lay 'um level with that from whence we were taken, if we would bless our eyes with so hidden secrets, or be partakers of so great Salvation. They were poor Shepherds that first saw this happy sight, as it were on purpose to inform us, that the poor humble Spirit has the first rank among those who ever see Salvation.

3. Or lastly, is it not κατὰ *secundum*, according to the inclination and capacity of all people, τῶν λαῶν of the people, λαὸς ἁ λαῶν durum genus, stony-hearted people those that set their faces against Salvation, to soften them if possible, or else to break them in pieces like a potters vessel. Or again λαῶν of λαῶν people, so call'd from the *Corner-stone Christ Jesus*, such as had already turn'd their faces towards salvation, to further and encourage them. Or τῶν λαῶν and ἐθνῶν, not only of the people, to their capacity, but to theirs too who were neither *his* people, nor *people*, whose rude barbarisms had exempted them from the number of civil Common-wealths; who did not deserve the name of *people*, not of men. Ἐθνῶν without τῶν, without either Article or Adjective, such as no body could point at with an Article, or construe with an Adjective: such as seem here to be excluded out of πάντα, that yet one would think includes all. Such as if you were to number up all the world, you would leave out them: to these εἰς ἐκκάλυψιν, to uncover and shew 'um to the world, and out of their thick darkness to light them the way unto salvation. Which brings me to the *benefits*, together with the *parties*. *Light and Glory; Light to the Gentiles, Glory to Israel. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel.*

I keep Gods method, *Fiat Lux*, begin with light, Gen. i. 2. I need not tell you 'tis a benefit. *Truly light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is*, says the Preacher, Eccles. xi. 7. and *Mordecai* joyns light and gladness together, Hest. viii. 16. So *salutare latificans* it is, salvation that brings joy and gladness with it.

2. Light of all motions has the most sudden, it even prevents the subtlest sense. And was it not so with this salvation? *when all things were in quiet silence, and that night was in the midst of her swift course, thine Almighty word leapt down from heaven out of thy Royal Throne*, Wisdom xviii. 14. *Salutare praveniens vota*, Salvation that prevents our dreams, and awakes our slumbering consciences.

3. And when our eye-lids are past those slumbers, then *Lighten mine eyes, O Lord, that I sleep not in death.* Those dark chambers have no lights: A light to lighten them, a light to shew my self to my self; *εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν* to reveal my inmost thoughts, to shew me the ugly deformity of my sins will be a blessing. *Lumen revelans tenebras*, no dark-lanthorn light, a light to shew us the darkness we are in; our *Salutare dispergens tenebras*, salvation that dispels the horrid darkness.

4. And to do that, the enlightning of the *medium* is not sufficient. *In conspectu*, κατὰ πρόσωπον just before us it may be, and the windows of our eyes damm'd up against it. A light then to pierce the Organ, *εἰς* into it it must be, *Lumen penetrans oculum*, salvation not only presented to the eye, but to the sight, the eye fitly disposed to behold it.

5. Every enlightning will not do *that*. It must be *ἀποκάλυψις*, the light of revelation. No other will serve the turn; not the light of *nature*, not the dictates of *reason*, not the light of *moral virtues*, or *acquired habits*, but something from above, something infused, such as comes from *ἀποκάλυψις* divine inspiration. What light else? no remedy, but buried we must be in everlasting night. Scriptures or revealed truth, the revelation of *Jesus Christ*, must save whoever shall be saved. *No man can come to me except the Father draw him*, St. John vi. 44. *No man lay hold upon the Name of Jesus, or salvation, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.* *Lumen divina revelationis*, salvation by the glorious light of Divine Revelation.

6. There is an *ἀποκάλυψις*, which yet wants an *ἀποκάλυψιν* a Revelation, that wants a Revelation, such as St. *Johns*, a dark one. This an *ἀποκάλυψις* with a *φῶς* a lightsome one, such as Revelations are when Prophecies are fulfilled of things past, not things to come. *Lumen Revelationis revelata*, a light of salvation as clear as day.

'Tis time now to ask whither it is this light and revelation lead us. I shall answer you out of *Zacharies Benedictus*, S. Luke i. 79. *They guide our feet into the way of peace. Send forth thy light and thy truth, and they shall guide me*, Plal. xliii. 3. So *David*, guide me; whither? *Psal. lvi. 13. To walk before God in the light of the living.* One light to another, the light of grace to the light of glory. So *Lumen dirigens*, or *salutare pertingens ad cælum*, salvation leading up to heaven.

Sum up all. Salvation to make us glad, a light, a light to comfort, not a lightning to terrifie. *The lightnings shone upon the ground, the earth trembled and was afraid*: no such, no lightning: Nor St. *Paul's* light, a light to blind, but to give light; nor to play about the *medium* only, but to open and dispose the weak dim eye. Not by a weak glimmering of *nature*, nor by a dusky twi-light, but by a clear Revelation: not an *ignis fatuus* to misguide us out of the way into bogs and quagmires, but to guide us to peace and to salvation. Lastly, not a light to any to see only that they are inexcusable, *ut essent inexcusabiles*, that seeing they might see, and not understand, a light to light 'um down to Hell, that they might see the way down through those gloomy shades with more ease, horror, and confusion; (that's the *event* indeed sometimes, the *end* never;) but thither upward, from whence it comes to *πρωτεύειν* at the beginning of the Text, to *ἀξία* at the end. And can your thoughts prompt to your desires any greater benefits? can you wish more?

And yet if we but consider in what plight the *parties* were upon whom the rays of this light shone: the salvation will seem more beneficial. They were in darkness, and could any thing be more welcome to them that sit in darkness, and the shadow of death then a *light to lighten*?

That

That was the miserable case the *Gentiles* now were in; *Neither have the Heathen knowledge of his laws*: 'twas so in *David's* time, and so continued on till this days rising Sun scattered the Clouds: and *now* the case is altered, *Dedi te in lucem gentium*, fulfilled in *his* time. The *Gentiles* now enlightned.

Enlightned, what's that? Those that are baptized are said to be *enlightned*, Heb. x. So the *Gentiles* enlightned will be in effect the *Gentiles* baptized. Baptized they may be with water, (and they had need of some such cleansing element, to wash their black, dark, sullied souls:) but there is another Baptism with the Holy Ghost, and fire, *fire* that's light, so to be baptized with light, will be with the *Holy Ghost*. 'Twas heavy midnight through the world. *Judea* was the only *Goshen*, the land of light, till he that was born this day breaking down the partition that divided *Palestine* from the nations, gave way for the light which before shone only there, to disperse its saving beams quite through the world. Then did they whose habitations were pitch'd in the region of death, whose dwellings in the suburbs of Hell, see a marvellous great light spring up, that's *salus personis accommodata*, salvation fitted to the parties.

Fitted, and *tempestively* too, to *them* it never could have come so opportunely. The light of nature was almost quite extinguish'd, a light to lighten that again. The light of grace quite vanish'd, an *ἐπιφάνεια* for that. The understanding darkened by ignorance, and error. The will darkened by hatred and malice. The most civilized *Gentiles* so much degenerated from the beauty of moral virtues (if we believe their own histories) so strongly fetter'd with the bonds of that uncomfortable night, as if they there lay exiled from the eternal providence, as the *wiseman* phrases it, all in *umbrâ mortis*, next door to utter darkness: when behold this light appears, this Sun rises with healing in his wings. Figur'd in the *time* of his birth, born when the days are shortest, most want of light; in the *dead* of night, when the nights are darkest; all, to shew *opportunitatem salutis*, the opportunity of this salvation.

And is not *Gloria* as fit for *Israelis*, as *Lux* for *Gentium*? *Israel* had a long time walkt in light, and not a whit the better for't: that which must convert a *Jew* must be *gloria*, so bright a splendour that must rather command then invite the eye.

Gloria, glory! and indeed they needed it. So far now were they fallen below their former credit and honour in the world, so much beneath their antient port and state, under the proud tyranny of a strange power, that nothing but glory could raise up their drooping heads.

I ask though, why *gloria Israelis*? why so joyn'd? Briefly thus: of *them* he came according to the flesh: to *them* especially was he promis'd, amongst them he liv'd, preacht, and wrought his miracles. In respect to him had all their glory, and all their prosperity was given 'um. In a word, *Salvation it self is of the Jew*, St. John iv. therefore their glory.

Yet that *Israelis populi* should not lift up their crest too high, or despise those whose weaker light comes short of glorious beams: 'Tis *gentium* first, then *Israelis*, the *Gentiles* in the first place here, *Israel* in the last. When the fulness of the *Gentiles* is come in, then for *Israel* too, then *gloria in excelsis*.

And as *gentium* has the precedence of *Israelis*, so has *light* of *glory*. God works by degrees, first *Lux*, then *Gloria*, first *Grace*, then *Glory*. First, he excites, then co-operates, then infu-

ses, then assists, then crowns. 'Tis a preposterous course to look for glory, where the light of grace never had operation.

But is glory so much the *Jews* peculiar, that the *Gentile* never shall rise thither? It cannot be, yet so it seems at the first blush, *Lumen gentium, gloria Israelis*, as if, to each their part. Indeed all have light, and light sufficient; but it displays not into glory, to any but *populi Israelis tui*. When they are become *populi tui*, thy people *Israel*, then the light circles into rays: *sufficiens* into *efficax*, and they are saved. But if you mark it, 'tis not *Israelis*, but *tui Israelis*, Not *Israel* after the flesh, but the *Israel* of God: there we first hear of *ἡμεῖς*, there light rises into glory, and good hope there is the *Gentiles* may prove *populi tui* thy people; *vocavi populum meum*, he said so whose *vocavi* is enough to make it so: and if *populi tui*, then *Israelis tui*, then they have prevailed with God; if thy people, then thy *Israel*, and so inheritors of this glory.†

Glory, and glory so near the end of the Text, makes me think of something without end; the highest pitch of this salvation, the *Perpetuity*. Glory is a word proper to that life to come: false and adulterate glories they are that are below. The glory of the people, that's eternal. *Lumen* and *gloria* both meet in the Text, and where they meet is eternity. 'Twas the complaint of old, that their Salvations and Saviours too gave place at length to the necessity of Nature, and were seen no more. Here's a Saviour never dies; *that* for himself; and *is become the Author of eternal salvation, that* for us, *Heb. v. 9.*

For indeed what is salvation, and salvation prepared for all, *Jew* and *Gentile*, and the light of salvation without glory? many lights there are that go out and set in darkness, that when the matter, the wick is worn away, dye into dismal shades. If the light shines not into glory, we are but in a poor case still.

And so we should be, would not this salvation now prove to be a *Saviour*. *Salutare tuum*, be *salvatorem nostrum*. We told you in speaking of τὸ σωτήριον οὗ, that it was *God's* peculiar. Now we tell you more, τὸ σωτήριον, must be *God*. None can be salvation in *abstracto* but he; and none but he crown light with glory. So you have the *Divine* Nature of this Saviour, his God-head; and yet there is another word in the Text besides, for *that*. That's φῶς, light. And *God is light*, *St. John i. 5.*

Ay, but sinned we had, and justice required that we should suffer: *God* cannot. He that must save us by suffering for us, must be *man*; he is so. *Viderunt oculi*, my eyes have seen it. No man has seen *God* at any time; therefore man he was. And *prepared*; *God* cannot be so: and prepared with a *body*, that's plain enough for *factus homo*, his *Humane* Nature.

Now put both together, and you have the *union* of both natures, both united. ἑστὶν and σωτήριον salvation seen, σωτήριον and ἐνσωματωσά salvation prepar'd, or *vidi* and *lucem*, light seen; or if you will *vidi* and *gloriam* his glory seen. *We saw the glory thereof, as of the only begotten Son of God*, *St. John i. 14.* More, united into one person, τὸ σωτήριον, φῶς, ἡμεῖς, all singular, one single person in the *Deity*.

But there are three persons there, as φῶς a contract, the *Divinity* contracted unto man: so φῶς derived from φῶς, light fetcht from light; a person *proceeding*. *God of God, light of light*, proceeding by way of generation, *Lux lucem generat*, one light begets another. So the second Person in the *Trinity*, the Son begotten of the Father.

But begotten a Son may be, and not coequal with his Father; a long time after rather: *Light* that's coequal with the Fountain, as soon as a light

light body, so soon light to an instant. The Son *co-eternal* with the Father, that's *egressus ejus ab aeterno*, His goings out from everlasting, Mich. v. 2. His eternal generation.

He has another, his temporal generation, *ἔγρηται* before the face of all people. *ἔγρηται* is down, so down he came, when he was prepared; that was, when born of the Virgin Mary.

There are three remarkable differences between this generation of his, and that of others, in the word *Light*.

1. Light is all diffus'd at once, not by parts; now this, then another; and Christ's Body was framed all at once, not *membratim*, one member after another, as other infants.

2. Light enters through solid bodies, as Glass, Crystal, or the like, without either penetration of dimensions, or cracking the glass. So Christ from the Virgin Body of blessed Mary, without the least hurt to her Virginity.

3. The light shines in the midst of noisom vapours, yet it self is kept pure and sincere. In like manner the Deity of Christ joyn'd to the humanity mixes not with its corruption, nor is defiled by it. *Marcion* need not fear the truth of his body, lest our corruption should pollute his Godhead, when the light it self confutes him, and convinces him, by the infinite distance between it self, and the power of the Creator.

There wants but one thing more to compleat the mystery of this wonderful Saviour, that's his Offices; if we can find them too in the Text, if we can bring them to *viderunt oculi* to be seen there, and stray no further, we have lighted upon a happy Text, *το σωτηριον* indeed, a salvation and a Saviour to whom nothing can be added. Let's try.

He is a *King*, there's one of his Offices, that from *ἰσθως*, thence the Prophet David seems to gather it, *Psal. 2. Yet have I set my King upon my holy Hill of Sion*. How proves he that? why, within a verse it comes, *I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance*.

He is a *Priest* next in *gloria Israelis*, there's another of his Offices. The Priesthood the glory of the Jew. *The glory is departed from Israel*, cries out *Thine has* his dying Wife: why? because the *Ark of God was taken*, 1 Sam. iv. 20. and because of her Father-in-law and her Husband, they dead and gone; what were they? the Priests of the Lord; when the Ark, and Priests are gone, the glory of *Israel* is departed too. They rise and fall together. A Priest then, but not to *Israel*, after the flesh alone, or after the Order of *Aaron*; but *Israelis tui*, of the true *Israel*, more properly entituled to this glory, as *being a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedeck*.

Lastly, he's a *Prophet* in *προφητα*, there's his third Office, his Prophe- tical; the light of Prophecie is the light of Revelation. A Prophet then he is, to reveal unto us Divine Mysteries, the will of his heavenly Father, *to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins*, S. Luke ii. 77.

A compleat Saviour now. *God and man, God begotten the Son, co-eternal* with the Father, born into the world, of a *Virgin*, pure and imma- culate, took our *nature* without sin, without *imperfection*, a King for the Gentiles, a Priest for *Israel*, a Prophet for both: a *King* to defend us, a *Priest* to purge us, a *Prophet* to instruct us.

This the Saviour, God the Son. *He* our salvation too. Yet comes not salvation from him alone, from all *three* Persons, the whole *Trinity* that. *ἐκ πατρὸς*, there's the Father preparing, sending. *ἐκ υἱοῦ* from *πατρὸς*, there's the

son prepared coming; *εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν*, how's that but by the graces and gifts of the *Holy Spirit*: there's the Holy Ghost opening and *enlightening* our eyes that we may see him. All three plain enough in the Text, as in the day: *Viderunt oculi*, your own eyes are witnesses.

Here's a sight indeed might well make old *Simeon* now desire to close up his eyes to see no more, *Ne vitam hanc posthac aliquā contamineat agritudine*, all objects henceforth would but defile his eyes.

But what tell you me of *Simeon's* theory? what of salvation, though ne're so great? what of *in conspectu omnium*, though ne're so general? what of light and glory, though ne're so excellent? if I may not back again to *viderunt oculi mei*? if, I my self cannot perceive it? if it be so far distant off that I cannot lay hold of it by mine own eyes of Faith and Hope? If I cannot see it to be mine, and with St. Paul apply it, *who loved me and gave himself for me*, Gal. ii. 20. *Omnium populorum* is too large, all may, but all shall not be saved. *Viderunt oculi mei*, that's somewhat, when mine own eyes can fix and dwell upon it.

Nay, that's not full enough, if *οἱ ὀφθαλμοί*, these very eyes, that so long expected it, the eyes of my body shall not be partakers of it; if they when they are fall'n into dust shall lie for ever folded up in eternal darkness, if eyes that weep out themselves in devout tears with looking and expectation shall not rise with these very bodies to that blessed vision: what reward for all these sufferings? what recompence?

I'll tell you how to see all, and stay no longer, nor go no further. This is the day of salvation, salvation day; and if ever, to day he will be seen. Cast but your eyes up to the Holy Table thither, your very sense may there almost see salvation, behold your Saviour. There it is, there *he* is in the blessed *Sacrament*. There it is prepared for you, a *body hast thou prepared*; his body, flesh and blood, prepared well nigh to be seen, to be tasted. *O taste and see how gracious the Lord is*, Psal. xxxiv. 8. Go up thither, and with old *Simeon* take him in your hands, take him yet nearer into your bowels. *Take, eat*, you shall hear one say so by and by. But stay not there upon your sense, upon the outward element. Look upon him with your other eye, the eye of *Faith*; let it be *viderunt oculi*, let it be both. Let it be *viderunt mei*, the applying eye of a special Faith. And that you may be sure not to go away without beholding him, there's *lumen* in the Text; and it would do well in your hands to search the dark corners of your hearts, to examine them. While our hearts are *darkened* with sins and errors we cannot see him. And if after strict examination we be not found in *charity*, we are yet in *tenebris*. St. John tells us, do but love your brother, *He that loves his brother abideth in the light*, S. John ii. 10. The sum is, Faith must be the eye, Repentance and Charity the *light*, by which you shall this day see your Saviour, and apprehend salvation: the three requisites those to a worthy Communicant. So shall you *there* find *light* to guide you out of the darkness of sin and misery. *Glory* to enstate you in the adoption of the Sons of God. *Salvation* with *Glory*, salvation here, *Glory* hereafter.

And when you have satisfied your eyes and hearts with this heavenly sight; Go, return home to your private Closets, shut up your eyes, never set open those windows to the vanities of the world again; but with a holy scorn disdain these painted glories, and let a veil of forgetfulness pass over 'um.

For our *viderunt* must not end when the Eucharist is past; when we depart this sacred place. I will take the cup of salvation, says the *Psalmist*:
there

there it is ; do that here. But I will rejoyce in thy salvation ; do so, both here and at *home*. *Et exultabo* ; and let me see you do so. Let not your joy be stifled in your narrow bosoms, but break out into expression ; into your lips, into your hands. Not in idle sports, excess of diet, or vain pomp of apparel, not that joy, the joy of the world, but the joy of the Holy Ghost.

It is salvation that you have heard and seen, and are yet to see to day, what's our duty now ? If it be salvation, let us *work it out with fear and trembling*. It is salvation to be seen, some eminent work : let us then confess we have seen strange things to day. A most certain sure salvation it is, let not a sacrilegious doubtful thought cast a mist upon it. It is prepared, let us accept it ; prepared for all, let us thank God for so fair a compass, and not uncharitably exclude our selves or others. God has enlarg'd the bowels of his mercy, let us not streighten 'um. It is a light, let us arise and walk after it. It is a glory, let us admire and adore it.

Was our Saviour seen ? so should we be every day in the Congregation ; was he prepared to day ? let us be always shod with the *preparation of the Gospel of peace*. Does *he* enlighten us, O let us never extinguish or hide that light, till this light be swallowed up by the light of the Lamb, till this day-spring from on high prove *mid-day*, till *Gentium*, and *Israelis* be friendly united in *τὸ σωτηρίου*, and no darkness to distinguish them, no difference between light and glory, till the beginning and end of the Text meet together in the circle of eternity, till *viderunt oculi* meet with *gloriam*, till our eyes may behold that light which is inaccessible, that light and glory which know no other limits but infinite, nor measure but eternity.

To which he bring us, who this day put off his glory to put on salvation, that by his salvation we might at length lift up our heads in glory, whither he is again ascended, and now sits together with his Father and the Holy Ghost. To which three Persons, and one God, be given all praise, and power, and thanks, and honour, and salvation, and glory for ever and ever. *Amen*.

A
S E R M O N
O N
St. Stephens Day.

A C T S vii. 55, 56.

But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

And said, Behold I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

Yesterday's Child is to day you see become a man. He that yesterday could neither stand nor go, knew not the right hand from the left, lay helpless as it were in the bosom of his Mother, is to day presented to us standing at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father: he whom earth yesterday entertained so poorly and obscurely; heaven here this day openly glories in. Now the horn of our salvation is raised up indeed: the Church thus shewing us plainly to day what yesterday we could not see for the rags and stable, that it was not a meer silly creature, a poor child, or man only that came to visit us, but the Lord of Glory; so making him some recompence, as we may say to day, for the poor case she shew'd him in yesterday.

But that's not the business. Yesterday was Christs *Birth-day*; to day St. Stephens; for *Natalitia Martyrum*, the *Birth-days of the Martyrs were their death-days call'd*: they then first said to be born, when they were born to execution. A day plac'd here, so near to Christs, that we might see as clear as day, how dear and near the *Martyrs* are to him; they lie even in his bosom, the first visit he makes after his own death was to them, to encourage them to theirs: The first appearance of him in heaven after his return up, was to take one of them thither.

And yet this is not all. *Christs Birth* and the *Martyrs Death* are set so near, to intimate how near death and persecution are to Christs Disciples, how close they often follow the Faith of Christ, so thereby to arm

us against the fear of any thing that shall betide us, even Death it self, seeing it places us so near him, seeing there are so fine visions in it and before it, so fair glories after it, as St. *Stephen's* here will tell you.

And if I add that Death is a good *memento* at a Feast, a good way to keep us within our bounds in the days of mirth and jollity, of what sort soever, it may pass for somewhat like a reason why St. *Stephen's* death is thus serv'd in so soon at the first course, as the second dish of our Christmas-Feast.

Nor is it for all that any disturbance to Christmas Joys. The glorious prospect of St. *Stephens Martyrdom* which gives us here the opening of Heaven, and the appearance then of Gods glory, and of Christ in glory, may go instead of those costly Masques of imagin'd Heavens, and designed Gods and Goddeses, which have been often presented in former times to solemnize the Feast. We may see in that infinitely far more ravishing and pleasing sights than these, which all the rarity of invention and vast charges could ever shew us. Here's enough in the *Text* to make us dance and leap for joy, as if we would leap into the arms of him in Heaven, who stands there as it were ready to receive us, as he was to day presented to St. *Stephen*.

I may now, I hope, both to season and exalt our *Christmas-Feast*, bring in St. *Stephens* story, that part of it especially which I have chosen, so full of Christ, so full of glad and joyful sights, and objects, that it must needs add, instead of diminishing our joy and gladness.

And yet if I season it a little now and then with the mention of Death, it will do no hurt. I must do so, that you may not forget St. *Stephens Martyrdom* in the midst of the contemplation of the glory that preceded it. That must not be, for the day is appointed to remember it. And though we shall not designedly come so far to decipher it (having no more then the *praludium* of his death before us) we will not so far forget it, but that we will take it into the division of the *Text*; in which we shall consider these four particulars.

1. His accommodation to his Death. His *being full of the Holy Ghost*, that fitted and disposed him to it.
2. His preparation for it. He *looked up stedfastly into Heaven*; so that he prepared himself for it.
3. His confirmation to it. He *saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God*; that encouraged and confirmed him in it.
4. His profession at it. *Behold*, said he, *I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God*: In those words he professed his faith, and proclaimed his vision of it.

By this manner of considering it, we shall do St. *Stephen* right, and *Christmas* no wrong; remember St. *Stephens Martyrdom*, and yet not forget *Christ's* being at it, celebrate St. *Stephens* memory, and yet no way omit *Christ's*. He being here to be lookt on as encourager of St. *Stephens Martyrdom*, as much as St. *Stephen* for his Professor and *Martyr*. By all together we shall fully understand the requisites of a *Martyr*, what is required to make one such, to be *full of the Holy Ghost*, to *look up stedfastly into heaven*, to look upon Christ as there, and as boldly to profess it; to be full of Grace and Spirit, full of Piety and Devotion, full of Faith and Hope, full of Courage and Resolution; all proportionably requisite to the spiritual Martyrdom of dying to the world, and leaving all for Christ; requisite too, all of them in some measure to dye well at any time, the very sum of the *Text*, to be learn'd hence and practis'd by us.

If

If I add all requisite to keep *Christmas* too, as it should be kept, with Grace and Devotion, with Faith and courage also against all that shall oppose it, that our *Christmas* business be to be filled with the Spirit, and not with meats and drinks, to look up to Heaven, to look up to *Jesus*, and never to be afraid or ashamed to profess it; there is nothing then in the *Text* to make it the least unseasonable. I go on therefore to handle it part by part. The first is St. *Stephens* accommodation to his *Martyrdom*, how he stands fitted for it.

And surely he could not be better. *Full of the Holy Ghost*; Ghost is Spirit, and what more necessary to a Martyr, than a spirit? The dreaming sluggish temper is not fit to make a Martyr: he must have Spirit that dares look Death soberly in the face.

Yet every Spirit neither will not make a Martyr; there are mad spirits in the world (they call them brave ones (though I know not why) that rush headily upon the points of Swords and Rapiers: yet bring these gallant fellows to a Scaffold or a Gibber, the common reward of their foolish rashness (which they mis-reckon'd valour) and you shall see how sheepishly they die, how distractedly they look, how without spirit. The spirit that will bear out a shameful or painful death without change of countenance or inward horror, must be holy. Where the Spirit is holy, the Conscience pure, the Soul clean, the man dies with life and spirit in his looks, as if he were either going to his bed, or to a better place. 'Tis a holy life that fits men to be Martyrs.

But spirit, and a holy Spirit is not enough to make a Martyr neither; though the Martyrs spirit must be a holy one, yet to dispose for martyrdom the holy Spirit must come himself with a peculiar power, send an impulse and motion into the soul and spirit that shall even drive it to the stake.

And every degree of power will not do it; it must be a full gale of holy wind that can cool the fiery Furnace into a pleasing walk, that can make death and torments seem soft and easie. *Full of the Holy Ghost* it is, that *Stephen* is said to be, ere we hear him promoted to the glory of a Martyr. The Spirit of holiness will make a man die holily, and the holy Spirit make him die comfortably; but the fulness of him is required to make him die courageously, without fear of death or torment, cruelty or rage.

By this you may now guess at Martyrs, who they are: not they that die for their folly and their humour: not they (2.) that die without holiness: not every one (3.) that dies, as we say, with valour and spirit; not they that die upon the motion of any spirit, but the holy one, that one holy Spirit; not they that die in Schism and Faction against the unity of this Holy Spirit, the peace of his Holy Church; none of these die Martyrs: die Souldiers, or valiant Heathen, or men of spirit they may, but men of the holy Spirit, Martyrs they die not. They only die such, that have lived holily, die in a holy Cause, in a holy Faith, and in the peace of holy Church, as in the Faith of one Holy Spirit, ruling and directing it into unity, upon good ground and warrant, and a strong impulsion so to do, without seeking for, or voluntarily and unnecessarily thrusting themselves into the mouth of death.

And yet there are strange impulses I must tell you of the spirit of Martyrdom, which ordinary souls or common pieties cannot understand. Only we must know that the spirit of Martyrdom is the spirit of Love, the very height of love to God, which how that can consist with the spirit of Schism, whereby we break the unity of Brethren, or how a man can so

highly love God as to dye for him, and hate his Spouse the Church, or his Brethren, is unimaginable. Some other engines there may be, as vain-glory, an obstinate humour of seeming constant to a false principle, an ignorant and self-willed zeal which may sometimes draw a man to die; but if the fulness of peace and charity does not appear, there is no fulness of the Holy Ghost, and they make themselves and their deaths but Martyrs, that is witnesses, of their own folly. He that pretends to be a Martyr, must have more than a pretence to the Spirit of charity.

II. And not to charity only, but to devotion too. He must (2.) prepare himself for it, stedfastly look up to Heaven, nay, into Heaven too, fill his Spirit with divine and heavenly provision for it, with *St. Stephen* here.

Who (1.) looks up to Heaven as to his Country, whither he was a going. He longs earnestly to be there. His soul, with holy *David's*, has a desire and longing to enter thither. He that looks but seriously up to Heaven and beholds that glorious Building, those starry Spangles, those azure Curtains, those lustrous bodies of the Sun and Moon, that vast and splendid circumference of these glistering dwellings, cannot but thirst vehemently to be there; soul and flesh thirst for it: O how brave a place is Heaven! how brave even but to look on. But if he can look (as here it seems *St. Stephen* did) into heaven too, and contemplate the happy Choirs of blessed Saints and Angels, the ineffable beauty of those inward Courts, the ravishing Melody and Musick they make, the quiet, peace, and happiness, that pleasure, joy, and fulness of satisfaction and contentment there, the majestick presence and blessed sight of God himself, with all the store-houses of blessedness and glory full about him, his very soul will be even ready to start with violence out of his body to fly up thither.

He that looks thus stedfastly, looks into Heaven, cannot now but look askew upon the earth: To look up into Heaven is (2.) to despise and trample upon all things under it. He is not likely to be a Martyr that looks downward, that values any thing below. Nay, he dies his natural death but unwillingly and untowardly, whose eyes, or heart, or senses are taken up with the things about him. Even to die chearfully, though in a bed of Roses, one must not have his mind upon them. He so looks upon all worldly interests as dust and chaff, who looks up stedfastly into heaven; eyes all things by the by, who eyes that well. The covetous worldling, the voluptuous Gallant, the gaudy Butterflies of fashion will never make you Martyrs; they are wholly fixt in the contemplation of their gold, their Mistresses, their Pleasures, or their Fashions. He scorns to look at these, whose eyes are upon Heaven.

Yet to scorn there, but especially to fit us against a tempest or a storm of stones, there is a third looking up to Heaven, in Prayer and Supplication. It is not by our own strength or power that we can wade through streams of Blood, or sing in flames; we had need of assistance from above; and he that looks up to Heaven, seems so to beg it. It was no doubt the spirit of Devotion that so fixt his sight; he saw what was like to fall below, he provides against it from above, looks to that great Corner-stone to arm him against those which were now ready to shower upon his head. It is impossible without our prayers, and some aid thence, to endure one petty pebble.

But to make it a compleat Martyrdom, we must not look up only for our own interests; for we are (4.) to look up for our very enemies, and beg

beg Heavens pardon for them. He that dies not in Charity dies not a Christian ; but he that dies not heart, and hand, and eyes and all compleat in it cannot die a Martyr. Here we find S. *Stephen* lifting up his eyes to set himself to prayer ; 'tis but two *verses* or three after that we hear his prayer, *Lord lay not this sin to their charge* : This was one thing it seems he lookt up so stedfastly to Heaven for. A good lesson (and fit for the occasion) so to pass by the injuries of our greatest enemies, as if we did not see them, as if we had something else to look after then such petty contrasts, as if we despis'd all worldly enmities as well as affections, minded nothing but heaven, and him that St. *Stephen* saw standing there.

All these ways we are to day to learn to look up to Heaven : as (1.) to our hop'd for Country : as (2.) from things that hinder us too long from coming to it : as (3.) for aid and help to bring us thither : as (4.) for mercy and pardon thence to our selves and enemies, that we may all one day meet together there. The posture it self is natural. 'Tis natural for men in misery to look up to Heaven ; nay, the very insensible creature when it complains, the Cow when it lows, the Dog when he howls, casts up its head according to its proportion, after its fashion, as if it naturally crav'd some comfort thence. 'Tis the general practice of Saints and holy persons. *Lift up your eyes*, says the Prophet, *Isa. xl. 26. I will lift up my eyes*, says Holy David, *Psal. cxxi. 1.* And distressed *Susanna* lifts up her eyes, and looks up towards Heaven, *ver. 35.* Nay, Christ himself fighting, or praying, or sometimes working miracles, looks up to Heaven, who yet carried Heaven about him, to teach us in all distresses to look up thither in all our actions, to fetch assistance thence. If we had those thoughts of Heaven we should, I know how little of the eye the earth should have. *Ubi amor, ibi oculus, where the love is, there's the eye.* We may easily guess what we love best by our looks ; if Heaven be it, our eyes are there ; if any thing else, our eyes are there. 'Tis easie then to tell you St. *Stephens* longings, where his thoughts are fixt, when we are told he so *stedfastly* lookt up to heaven.

And indeed it is not so much the looking up to Heaven, as the stedfast and attentive doing it that fits us to die for Christ. 'Tis *arduous* a kind of stretching or straining the eye-sight to look inquisitively into the object. To look carelessly or perfunctorily into Heaven it self, to do it in a fit, to be godly and pious now and then, or by starts and girds will not serve turn ; to mind seriously what we are about, that's the only piety will carry it. *Plus valet hora fervens quam mensis tepens.* One hour, one half hour spent with a warm attention at our prayers, is worth a month, a year, an age, of our cold Devotions. 'Tis good to be zealous, says St. Paul, somewhat hot and vehement in a good matter.

And it had need be a stedfast and attentive Devotion that can hold out with this *But*. To stand praying or looking up to Heaven when our enemies are gnashing their teeth upon us, and come running head-long on us, to have no regard to their rushing fury, nor interrupt our prayers, nor omit any ceremony of them neither, for all their savage malice, now pressing fiercely on us, but look up stedfastly still, not quick aside : this looks surely like a Martyr. The little Boy that held *Alexander* the candle whilst he was sacrificing to his Gods, so long that the wick burnt into his finger, and yet neither cried nor shrunk at it, lest he should disturb his Lords Devotions, will find few fellows among Christians to pattern him in the exercise of their strictest pieties. Let but a leaf stir, a wind breathe, a fly buzz, the very light but dwindle, any thing move or shake, and our poor Religion

(alas) is put off the hinge; 'tis well if it be not at an end too. What would it do if danger and death were at our heels, as here it was? Oh this attentive stedfast fastning the soul upon the business of heaven were a rare piety if we could compass it. This glorious *Martyr* has shew'd us an example, the lesson is, that we should practise it.

But all this is no wonder, seeing he was full of the *Holy Ghost*. That Almighty Spirit is able to blow away all diversions, able to turn the shower of stones into the softness and drift of Snow, able to make all the torments of Death fall light and easie. If we can get our souls filled once with that, we need fear nothing, nothing will distract our thoughts, or draw our eyes from Heaven.

Then it will be no wonder neither to see next the *Glory of God*, and *Jesus standing at the right hand of God*.

I call'd this point *St. Stephens* confirmation, or his encouragement to his death. He that once comes to have a sight of God and Christ, of Gods Glory, and Christ at the right hand of it, of either the one or the other, much more of both, cannot want strength to die, be the death of what kind it will. It was a gallant speech of *Luther*, when he was dissuaded from appearing before the Council (of *wormes* I think it was) that he would go thither, though all the tiles of the houses were so many Devils. Had every stone that was cast at the *Martyr Stephen* been a Devil, he would not after this vision have been afraid. *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom then should I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom then shall I be afraid?* says *David*, *Psal. xxvii. 1.* and yet he saw nothing like this sight. Gods presence is enough, whether it be seen by the eye of sense, or by the eye of Faith, to keep us stedfast, to make death hide its head for fear, while we stand triumphing over it.

I conceive it impertinent to make it a business to enquire too solicitously what this glory was, and how *St. Stephen* saw it. That it was some glorious sight, some high resplendent light or brightness, such as God used to appear in, as *Exod. xxiv. 17.* *Numb. xiv. 10.* *1 Kings viii. 10.* to *Moses* and his *Prophets*, there call'd his glory; or some apparition of Angels in shining garments winging about a throne of glory, visibly appearing to the eye of the *Martyr Stephen*, is the probablest to conceive, and the shining of his face, as if it had been the face of an Angel, chap. vi. ver. 15. is an evidence it was a visible appearance.

But no doubt his understanding saw further then his eye into Heaven, that lookt and saw a glory there of which the sense though elevated to his height cannot be capable. *Divinum lumen*, says *St. Gregory Nissen*, the inaccessible light. *Spem in re*, says *St. Hilary*, His hope already. *Deum & Divinitatem*, says *St. Austin*, God and the Godhead. *Imo Trinitatem*, and that, *facie revelata*, says he again, *The blessed Trinity unveiled.* *Futura vita gaudia*, says *Bede*, *The joys of the other life.* These all he saw say they, and we shall make no scruple to say, in Spirit so he did, as far as humane nature is capable in this condition.

But without question, Christ he saw in his body standing amidst that glory; the words are plain for that, and that alone were enough to put courage into the most coward heart.

To see his Faith confirm'd by sight, and Christs Glory with the Father visibly appear, to see whom he had trusted, and for whom he had laboured and disputed now with his own eyes in glory, must needs make him kiss the hands that would now send him so soon to him.

To see him (2.) standing at the right hand of God, as if he were risen from

from his sitting there to behold the sufferings and courage of his *Martyr* that stood below, now made a spectacle to Christ and all his Angels: that's an honour he may well glory in.

To see him (3.) *standing* amidst his hosts, as if he were coming down to help him: that adds more spirit still.

To see him (4.) *standing at the right hand of God*, as if he suffered with him, and was therefore pleading for him, as friends and advocates used to do with the accused party at the Bar. This infuses yet a greater confidence, that notwithstanding all his sins or weaknesses he shall now easily prevail.

To see him (5) *standing* as a Priest to offer him up a sweet smelling sacrifice to his Father that still increases it.

To see him lastly *standing* like a judge of masteries at the end of the race or goal to crown him with a crown of glory, cannot but make him think long for the death that shall bring him to it.

All these ways Christ may be brought in here as *standing* for us. In the Creed we profess him sitting, thereby acknowledging his place in Heaven, and his right to be our Judge: yet when his Saints and Servants have need of him, he stands up to see what it is they want, how valiantly they behave themselves; he stands up to shew them who it is they trust, he stands up to help and aid them, he stands up to plead and even suffer with them, he stands up to present them to his Father, he stands up to reward them with the garlands of Glory.

Sometimes it is, (oftner it has been when the beginning of Christianity needed it at first) that by some visible comforts and discoveries he shews himself to the dying Saint. Often it is that the soul ready to depart feels some sensible joys and ravishments to uphold its failing spirits. But he is never wanting with inward assistances and refreshments to those who suffer for him. We must not look all of us, nor Confessors, nor Martyrs now adays to see Visions and Revelations with St. *Stephen*; we are set in a fixt way, where Reason and Religion so long prov'd and practis'd is able to give us comfort in the saddest distresses. God does not usually confirm our reason by our sense in the revelation of himself, or what he expects from us. It may be because the Devil, grown cunning now by so many centuries of years, has taken up of late (as he is Gods ape) a way to fetch off souls by some sensible delusions from the Faith; for he can transform himself (nay, does so, says the Apostle) *into an Angel of light*. For this it may be God sends us now to the word, and to the testimony, and leaves us to reason, tradition, and example of so many ages to expound it. However this is sufficient that neither God nor Christ will leave us wholly comfortless, but will surely stand by us when we need, and supply us as there is.

Indeed he cannot look for such a profession upon it as we find here from St. *Stephen*; yet to a stedfast profession of our Faith, those assistances he still allows us are sufficient. We will look a little upon *Stephens* though.

And first, here is a kind of profession of the Blessed Trinity, the Holy Ghost, here at the beginning of the first *verse* of the *Text*: God in the middle, and Jesus at the end.

Here is (2.) a profession of Christs manhood, whilst he calls him the Son of Man.

Here is (3.) a profession of his Faith in all of them by his so loud proclaiming.

Here is (4.) a profession of Gods ready help, Christs ready assistance to his Saints in trouble.

Here

Here is (5.) a profession of Gods owning the Christians cause, and gloriously standing up to confirm and maintain.

Here is (6.) a profession of Christs opening Heaven to all Believers; that Heaven is always open to us if we could see it; that Gods Glory shines upon us to shew us the way thither; that Christ stands there to make our way, to guide us thither.

Here lastly is a profession of his confidence and resolution, that though his enemies stand pressing now about him, and Death before him, he will not eat his words, will not renounce his faith, will not slip the collar, will not deny any thing of what he has said or done, disclaim any thing that he believed, desert him whom he had trusted, but preach him to his death, and die upon it.

And now the heavens being open, 'tis good to make what haste we can to enter it. *Moneta* a famous Doctor of *Pononia*, upon the hearing these words, *Behold I see the heavens open*, preacht soberly upon that they would be quickly shut if men made no more haste to enter, betook himself presently, says his Story, to a Religious Order. I say nothing to that particular, but yet must tell you the words are strong enough (if we would look as stedfastly into them as *St. Stephen* did into Heaven) to persuade to a Religious Life. Heaven will not always be open to us. *Patet atri-janna Ditis, 'Tis Hell that stands continually wide ope*. We are told by Christ himself that the Bridegroom comes, and the doors are shut; there will be a time if we continue in sin and negligence when Heaven it self, nay, Christ himself will not let us in. Take we then our time whilst Christ stands at the door. Heaven has this day been strangely open to us, and Christ stood there in a glorious manner; though our eyes did not, our Faiths I hope did see him there: 'Tis good taking this opportunity to get in, we know not whether we shall live to the next opening. Prepare we then our selves with *St. Stephen* here by stedfast looking upward into Heaven, by disdaining and scorning all things below, by vehement earnest longings after things above, by setting our selves attentively and constantly to our Devotions, and our Prayers, by holy Charity and praying for Friends and Enemies, by constant resolutions to live and die to Christ, by a bold profession of our Faith and continuance in it, by making it our *Christmas* work, our *Holiday* business, our Festival delight: And then, though I cannot promise you Visions here, while we live below, I dare promise you the blessed Vision hereafter above, where we shall see *Jesus standing at the right hand of God*, and there stand round about him, with this blessed *Martyr Stephen*, and all his Saints and Martyrs in the Glory of God forevermore.

A S E R M O N O N Innocents Day.

St. MATTH. ii. 16.

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the Wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth and slew all the Children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time, which he had diligently enquired of the Wise men.



THE Text needs no *Apology*. 'Tis for the *Day*. The *Day* is that of the poor Martyred *Innocents*, and the Text the *Story* of it. Yet what does *Day*, or *Story* here to day? How does the relation of one of the saddest murders that the *Sun* ever saw, suit with the news of the gladdest Joy that day e're brought forth? How do the cries and screeches of slaughtered *Infants* keep time or tune with the Songs and Hymns of *Angels*? An hellish crue of murderers to day, agree with the heavenly host we heard of three days since? What does *Herod* so near *Christ*, or *Childermas* in *Christmas*? Do not both *Day* and *Story* want an *Apology*, though the Text does not?

Neither of them; they come well now to season our Mirth and Jollities, that they run not out too lavishly. For we find too oft there are sad days in *Christmas* too; days wherein we play the *Herods*, and kill our Children and our selves by disorders and excesses, for want of some such serious thoughts: story and day stand fitly here to mind us of it.

But *besides* they are well plac'd to teach us that we must not look only for gaudy days by *Christ*; he says himself, he came to send a sword, St. Mat. x. 34. Sent it to day amongst the *little ones*: sends sword and fire too sometimes amongst the *great ones* in the midst of all their pleasure; and we must expect it commonly, the closer we come to him. Nor *Christianity* nor *innocence* can excuse us. We therefore not to think it strange when it so falls out, reckon it rather a *Christmas* business, the matter of our rejoicing, to suffer with these *Infants* for *Christ*, though we know
not

not why, no more than they : never to think much to lose our *Children* or *our selves* for him at any time, and so bring *them* up, that they may learn to think so too. These Meditations I hope are not unseasonable, no, not in *Christmas*.

Yet for all that, I ask *again*, Is it possible that there should be such a thing in truth? such a wantonness in cruelty as to kill so many thousand Children so barbarously in a time of *peace*? is it probable that men should raise up *fears* and *jealousies* of their own; and make such innocent Lambs pay for it? 'Tis *Gospel* you see, so true as that. Such a thing there was in the days of *Herod*; and we have seen so much like it in our *own*, that we may the easier believe it: Children and innocents slain, and undone for nothing but because some men with *Herod*, here, thought they were *mockt* when disappointed of their projects, when *Christus Domini*, the Lords *Christ* or Anointed had escap'd them, and the Wise men came not in to hinder it: so they grew exceeding wroth upon it, and make poor *Bethlehem* and *Rachel*, all of us still rue sorely for it.

Well then, the *Text* being so true in it self, so pat to the time, and not disagreeable to the times of *late*; so profitable, besides, we'll now go on with it by *God's* blessing, and see what we can make of it. 'Tis the *Martyrdom* I told you (and I have the word from *S. Cyprian*, and *S. Austin*) of a company of little innocent *babes*. And we have in it these particulars.

1. Their *Persecutor* or *Murtherer*, *Herod*.
2. The *occasion* of their *Martyrdom*, *Persecution*, or *Murther*. His thinking himself *mockt*. *When he saw he was mocked of the Wise men*, &c.
3. The *cause* of it. *Wroth* he was, exceeding wroth, infinitely angry to be *disappointed*, that's the reason he fell upon them.
4. The little *Martyrs* themselves. *All the children that were in Bethlehem and all that were in the coasts about*.
5. Their *Martyrdom*. *Slain* they were, men were sent out to kill them. *He sent forth and slew them*.
6. The *extent* and *exactness* of the cruelty observed in it, *all the children from two years old and under*, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the *Wise men*.

These are the *Parts* that make up the *History*. And if in the pursuing it I shew you a *mystery* now and then, shew you there are more *Herods* and more *martyred* children then we see in the *letter* of the *Text*, that the story is acted over still every day by *our selves*, you will be content I hope to take it for an *application*, that brings all home. And it will not do amiss even now at *Christmas* to mind us of it, that however we may not act it then of all times else; never pollute our mirth with sinning against our selves or others in it, or defile our joys with the cries of the oppressed, never bring *Herod* so near *Christ* again, never make a *Childermas* of *Christmas*.

To go on yet in the order of the *Text*, we begin with the *Persecutor* or *murtherer* of the *Innocents*, whose day it is, and that here we find was *Herod*.

Indeed there were *under Officers* that did the deed; for some such are intimated when 'tis said *he sent*, and some such there will be *always* to do the drudgeries of sin, for them that will employ them: but the wickedness yet is laid at the *contrivers* doors: that's insinuated when the *murder* notwithstanding is given to *Herod* by and by; *he* did but *send*, and yet he *slew* them, says the *Text*. Let who will be the Executioner, the *plotter* or commander is the *Murtherer*; and *God* will brand him for it, be he never so cunning, never so great. *Herod* with all his men of War shall not escape it.

But

But may we know what this *Herod* was? an *Idumean* first he was, you may know it by his hands, *red and rough*. No such hands I hope in *Israel*, or in the dwellings of *Jacob*. They are strangers to *that* at least that can be so cruel: and it had been happy for the *sheep*, happy for us of late, if we had not known the voice of strangers, men of *another* Country to help on our ruine, but kept close to our own *Shepherds*, as *Christ* tells us his *own sheep* do, St. John x. 3, 5.

2. *Herod* was a man but of an obscure and private family. 'Tis *such* commonly that build up their greatness upon blood and ruine; the *noble* and generous soul abhors it.

3. Yet *thirdly*, this private and mean condition his subtilty and cunning had now advanc'd into a *Throne*; the less wonder still, that *he* should be so savage. *Tyrants* and *Usurpers* are so *ever*, jealous and suspicious, fierce and bloody. They are they that dye their *Purples* in the gore of *Innocents*, whilst *Kings* even *undo* themselves with their own mercies. 'Tis the *Step-mother* that would have the Child *divided*; such only that are for *divide*, & *impera*, that are for *Divisions* to maintain their interest or their plea. The true *Mother* had rather part with her Child and all she hath, then see it murdered: But the ambitious design of power and greatness, the driving on an advantageous interest, the keeping an unjust possession, are things that slay *all* before them; nor the *tears* of *Mothers*, nor the *cries* of *Infants*, nor the *relations* of nature, nor the *obligations* of friendship, nor the *charms* of innocence can do any thing against those *furies*. *Ahab* and *Jezabel*, and *Zimri*, and *Jehu*, and *Herod* are sufficient witnesses how cheap the heads of all sorts are that *seem* but to stand in the way of their designments; how easily *Judges* and *Judicatories* are packt against them, notwithstanding reason and law stand whole for them.

4. From such a one as I have hitherto presented *Herod*, we can perhaps look for no other. But *Herod* I must tell you (4.) was a great *pretender* to Religion, a high dissembler of *Zeal* and *Piety* throughout; none more zealous and importunate to know *Christ*, and go and worship him, then he, *ver. 8*. And is *he* the persecutor? yes he. It is not all Religion (my Brethren) that is called so: nor are all for *Christ* that *pretend* for him. The greatest *Zealots* have proved often the greatest *persecutors*. And the *Profelyte* either to a false Religion, or to the pretence only of a true (and one of these was *Herod*) is commonly two-fold more the *Child of Hell* then he that made him, S. *Matth. xxiii, 15*. We cannot, you see by *Herod*, trust all pretenders. There are some that varnish over their very *murthers* with that pretext of Religion; and whilst they pour out the blood of *Innocents* upon their *Scaffolds*, dare say they sacrifice at the Altar of the *God of Justice*. And had we not seen and felt it too from some *huge Saints* and *Zealots*, I should have spar'd the *note*. But you see e're we were aware we have discovered *mysteries* from the *Text*, and shew'd you (as I intimated I should) other *Herods* there besides this *one*. I am afraid I shall shew you more anon. In the *interim*, shall I give you *Herods* Character out of *Chrysologus* to conclude the *Point*? *Magister mali, Minister doli, Ira artifex, &c.* says he. He was a *master* of mischief, a *minister* of deceit, an *artist* in cruelty, an *inventer* of wickedness, a *contriver* of villany, a *destroyer* of Religion, an *enemy* of nature, an *oppressor* of innocence, *bad* to all, *worse* to his own, *worst* to himself, from whom *Fesus* fled, not so much that he might *escape* him, as that he might not *see* him; a *fiery Dragon* by his name, *Herodes jerudes*, so *Arius Montanus* etymologizes it from the *Syriack*, a *Dragon* that devours all like fires before him, spared not his *own* if they came but in his way, near a kin (sure) to the

the Dragon in the Revelations, Rev. xii. 17. that was wroth with the woman and her seed, did all he could to destroy it, even the *promised* seed too, could he have found *him*. The fittest tempered man in the world, *this*, to begin the persecution of the Church, and by whom we may learn what sort of persons *they* are who are still raising or continuing it; *Musbrookes* of a sudden growth, men newly rais'd, men covetous and ambitious, proud and disobedient, traitorous and heady, men without natural affection, brethren removed as I may say, as the Edomites from the Israelites, great pretenders, though to godliness, and the power of it, yet without it. Such make the *perillous times* the Apostle speaks of, 1 Tim. iii. 2, 3, 4. or the times *perillous* both to men and children. And now let's see what *occasion* they take to do it. Herod's here, was his conceiting himself mockt by the wise men.

II. We cannot help mens conceits, though they help on our ruines, nor cure a vain jealousy, though death attend it at the heels. We perish oftentimes by meer mistakes. The *wise men* mockt not Herod, he only thought so; nor wise nor good men use Kings or Princes so, though they be Herods, as bad as can be: God calls them another way, and he takes it for an affront, that they paid not him the complement of a visit e're they returned. A hard case, that the attendance upon a command of God's should prove so prejudicial, that obedience should be a crime: but we can look for no other, where an Herod is the interpreter of the action.

And yet (2.) 'tis harder, a harder case to be undone for another mans error or omission. It was so here; the *wise men* offend, at least are thought so, and the Children pay for't beyond an imagination. *Delirant Reges plectuntur achiivi*. The *wise men* return another way; Herod fancies himself neglected by it, and the innocent babes, who were concern'd in neither of them, are punisht for the ones omission, and the others mistake.

Nay and (3.) it seems Gods own contrivement too. And does the God of Justice so little regard innocent blood, as thus to draw it on by the way of a particular providence, we cannot understand the reason of? 'Tis enough God does. We have nought to do but to submit, and think that best that God does, be it never so hard. Our own wisdom will mock the wisest of us, more then Herod was by the Wise men, if we pry narrower.

For the only business we can see clearly here, is, how small a thing men make an occasion to commit a villany. How great a matter does a little fire kindle? says St. James iii. 5. Lord! how easily do men raise themselves into an anger? and in their anger fall presently upon the next comes near them? dig down a wall too to come at them? Need we had with St. Paul to cut off occasion from them that desire occasion, 2 Cor. xi. 12. do what we can to do it; for there are those that will take it, even concerning the Law of our God, as Daniels adversaries serv'd him, Dan. vi. 4. rather then want an opportunity to do mischief.

Indeed, I know a mock, an affront, a bitter jest, a cutting word strikes deep, wounds sore; (and I could wish men would be warier in that point then sometimes we see them) Kingdoms and Churches have been shatter'd by it; but there are mocks as well as scandals that are taken and not given. These I know not how to cure, and to fence less.

Men think sometimes they are mockt, when disappointed of a sin, of a project, of doing mischief. Potiphars Wife, when Joseph would not comply with her lewd desires, she was mockt (forsooth) the Hebrew servant came in to mock her, when he would not come in to sin with her; nay and her Husband must bear the blame, as if he had done it, brought him

to that purpose, *Gen. xxxix. 14.* There, being disappointed of a *sin*, was being mockt.

Dalilah (forsooth) *she* is mockt too, she says, because *Samson* will not discover where his great strength lay, *Judges xvi. 10, 13, 15.* that she might rob him of it, and destroy him by it. There being disappointed of doing mischief, was being mockt.

Again, *Balaam* he is mockt by the poor *Ass*, smites her with his staff, and tells her so, when she falls down and would go no further, *Numb. xxii. 29.* hindering thereby the project he was going about, of enriching himself with the wages of unrighteousness. There the disappointment of a rich or gainful project, is a being mockt.

Nay, sometimes the very denouncing of Gods judgments seems to some men a mocking, as it did to *Lots sons in law*; *Gen. xix. 8.* Sometimes the very preaching a Resurrection does so too, *Acts xvii. 32.* I am afraid both do so still to many now adays, whose wits are more then their Religion, and their parts greater then their graces; not to say their portions (too) in this life fairer (I fear) then in the other. Sometimes (6.) when God bids one thing, and men another, God sends us this way, and they call that; if we obey Gods order, and not their ordinance, they are mockt, they think, and slighted, and we must look to answer it with our peril, and the children unborn perhaps may rue it. In a word, men will needs think they are mockt sometimes, say here with *Herod* they see it too, unless you will betray Christ and his Religion to them, that they may seize and order them how they please. That's the brief of the business here, that *Herod* so much stomacht, that the wise men would not do so, would not tell him where Christ was, that he might murder him.

If now the being disappointed of a sin, of a project of doing mischief; if the obedience to Gods command, if the protecting Christ, which were all the cases here; or if the denouncing Gods Judgments against sinners, or the preaching of the Resurrection, or the defence of our Religion, and not betraying it (which is almost the parallel case sometimes) must pass with some great men, and men of wit, for a mocking of them and a sufficient occasion for tyrannical spirits to bring on ruine and destruction even upon the innocent, and a warrantable ground to justifie War or Murder, rapine or injustice, Godhelp us, and keep us upon all occasions, we know not when we are safe. The comfort only is, God is not mockt, he sees it, and disposes it. Christ is safe by the hand, and how ill soever it falls out, man only is mockt, our enemies are so, and all is well.

III. This for the occasion that brought this days Lambs to the slaughter. But was there not some cause besides? had *Herod* no cause to do it? All we find exprest is, that he was wroth, exceeding wroth: that's our third particular.

And truly that's enough in some mens judgments to cast down all before them. Enough, we have found it; but cause I cannot call it, to call it right. Mans own impetuous anger will not excuse the mischief it commits. Anger it self must have a cause, or it but aggravates the sin; is so near a sin it self, that 'tis hard to discern and discover when it is not. The Apostle cannot mention being angry, but he adds with the same breath, and sin not, *Ephes. iv. 26.* dares not leave anger to breath it self without that caution.

Yet supposing the anger not a sin, exceeding is. Though we may perhaps be angry, we must not be exceeding. *Moses* and *Aaron* both paid for it, *Numb. xx. 10, 12.* lost the enjoyment of *Canaan*, fell short of their

rest by it; and this same *exceeding* still disturbs our rest and quiet; nothing more. *Moses* his just indignation at the *golden Calf* made him somewhat oversee himself, when it made him cast down and break the *Tables* of the *Commandments* which *God* himself had written with his own finger, *Exod. xxxii. 19.* A shrewd intimation to us, that the *violence* of that passion, even in a good cause sometimes, is very prone ever and anon to make us do so too, do that in a moral and worse sense, break the *Commandments* worse far then they were broken then.

But if the cause be bad, and the wrath *exceeding*, no wonder if it break out into all excesses: Shall we examine what it was here? (for the causes of our angers are not always written upon our foreheads :) Was it that the *Magi* neglected his commands, came not to him in their return? that was somewhat, but that was not it. Was it that he truly thought himself mock'd by their not returning by him? Then indeed it was, but it was not that: that was the *occasion*, but not the cause. What was it think we then? why, *Christ* he saw was now in a possibility to escape him, and by a misconceit, his *Kingdom*, he imagin'd, lay now at stake, seeing the *King* of the *Jews*, whose birth he had lately heard of, and so much dreaded, was now gotten he fear'd out of his reach. This was the business that so toss'd him and turmoil'd him; and from it we learn these five particulars. (1.) What *strange* fears and jealousies our interests and ambitions raise within us. (2.) What *unreasonable* mistakes those fears and jealousies bring us to. (3.) What *hideous cruelties* those mistakes make us run upon. (4.) How hardly *Christ* himself escapes from them: (5.) Or if he does, how *exceeding* wroth and angry we grow upon it.

1. If *interest* or *ambition* possess our thoughts, how do we tremble at the very *whistlings* of the wind, and start at every shadow? Let *Adonijah* but beg *Abisbag*, and he is interpreted to beg the *Kingdom*, *1 Kings ii. 22.* Let *Abijah* find *Fereboam* in the way, and foretel him the *Kingdom* shall be his when *Solomon* sleeps with his Fathers, and *Solomon* cannot sleep in quiet till he has driven him out of the land, *1 Kings xi. 40.* And

2. When these fears have once seiz'd upon us, what mistakes run we not into? *Abimelech* gives *David* but a few loaves of bread, and a *Sword* to defend him in the way he went, and he is presently mistaken by *Saul* for a plotter against his life, for a traitor and a conspirator, *1 Sam. xxii. 13.* Many such mistakes men have made of late, too late, I fear, to be yet forgotten.

Yet forgotten they would be easily, came they not (3.) attended with *cruelties* at their heels. *Abimelechs* being mistaken unhappily cost him and his family all their lives, except *Abiathar's*: *Men and Women, Children and Sucklings, Oxen and Asses, and Sheep*, all to the *Sword* upon it, *1 Sam. xxii. 19.* There is no stop nor bounds to the rage of that error and mistake which *interest* and *ambition* raise or nourish for their own ends and purposes.

It were well *Christ* himself could escape them (4.) But *Christ* and *Religion* bear the blame as soon as any: And when I told you *Abimelech* and the *Priests* suffered so deep upon mistake, it was ready enough for you to conceive *Religion* cannot always defend it self, or its *Priests* and *Votaries*, from the fury even of an unfortunate Politician, *Saul* or *Herod*. And if the *Messiah* himself, and known to be so, must be sought out, to be destroyed, even by him who both knew it, and seem'd to desire it, there are men it seems that for their interests can know *Christ*, and yet persecute him. No wonder then if they deal so with his Children and Servants, and persecute them, though they know them such.

Or lastly, if *Christ* himself by some peculiar providence be delivered from

from their rage, if the grounds of Religion escape sound, the lesser parts, the Rites and Ceremonies, and lesser points of Religion, the Innocents, must be massacred, (for we are exceeding angry) and though the Head escape, the lesser members shall pay dearly for it; which though the great ones do not, the little ones shall. *Herod sends out and slays all the children that were in Bethlehem, and the coasts about*, as many as he can lay hands on. His interests make him fear, his fears make him mistake, his mistake makes him cruel; and though Christ's Kingdom be not of this world, nor Christ an enemy either to Herod or Caesar, yet the politician is bound in honour to justify his own fears, and rather than put up a fancied affront or slighting, or confess a mistake, wreak his anger upon the helpless Innocents, and make them both the Martyrs of Christ, and the witnesses of his own cruelty. Those are they I am next to speak of.

IV. And I justly call them Martyrs; for if it be the cause that makes the Martyr (and we say it is) and Christ's cause be that which entitles them more particularly to that name, I am sure they are no less; their cause was Christ's; for his sake they were killed, as the Psalmist speaks, *all the day long*, accounted too, as sheep, or little lambs, appointed to be slain, Psalm xliv. 22. And you may see them following the Lamb too under that notion, with the Fathers name written in their foreheads, Rev. xiv. 1. the very first-fruits unto God, and to the Lamb, ver. 4. the first that suffered, that died for him. Who though they could not some of them speak at all, and other of them but jabber at the most, yet they all speak out and plain these following lessons.

I. That there is no age too young for Christ's business one way or other. They that cannot speak for Christ can die for him. They that cannot come themselves may be brought to him. They that cannot live with him, being just going out of the world as they are coming in, may die with him in holy Baptism ere they go. Even of such also is the Kingdom of God, St. Mat. x. 44. and it matters not whether they go by Blood or water thither.

Nor (2.) is any age too young to speak out Christ's Glory neither. Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, thou hast perfected praise, says the Prophet, Psal. viii. 2. S. Matth. xxi. 16. and never more eminently fulfilled then this day; their very cries were songs of praise, Hosanna's to the Son of David, blessed is he that cometh, Hallelujahs in the ears of God, in whose name he cometh. None ever cried it louder, or proclaimed it higher.

The Chaire is a full one too; of all the children of Bethlehem, and the coasts about, to such an age; 14000. is the least that any say, 44. some. A full Chorus indeed, a large first-fruits of Martyrdom, to teach us, thirdly, not to doubt of that which is attested by so many witnesses, the coming of Christ, nor think strange of that condition, which entered with him, which entered first with Christianity, whilst it yet was in the Cradle, Persecution, and Martyrdom; but to bear it patiently ever when it comes, seeing Children themselves have undergone it here by thousands, and trod the way before us.

But they not only teach us patience by their martyrdom, but innocency by their innocence: a fourth lesson that they give us. Let Herod and all his Hosts, all the Herods, and Hosts, and Armies of the world do what they can, they cannot hurt us if we keep our innocence. Out of the world they may thrust us, but into Heaven it is they drive us. Here if they please they may truly see themselves mockt indeed, when against their wills they undo us into a Kingdom, think they destroy us, but will find at last to their confu-

confusion, that they have been the great instruments to us both of life and glory. *Rapiunter quidem*, says S. Austin, *à complexibus matrum, sed red-duntur gremius angelorum*: These Infants, says he, were snatcht indeed from their Mothers breasts, but into the laps of Angels were they carried, and into the bosom of the Almighty. *Quos feliciter nati*, says he, again, How happily were they born that were thus early born for Christ: how happily are they all born to whom it is given to die for him? Augustus was deceived, very foully out, when he cried it was better to be Herods Hog, then Herods Child: that Child surely which died among these Innocents, whatever his other were, was born to a Throne of Glory, to the only Crown and Kingdom. Enough *this* to dry up Rachels tears, to stop the tenderest Mothers moans at any time, when she but thinks she hath brought forth a Child to Christ, and placed him so soon in innocence and glory.

After the thoughts of *this*, it cannot be grievous if I now tell you of their Martyrdom or Murther; that as young, and innocent, and many as they were, Herod sent forth and slew them all.

V. You must not look that I should give you here the several ways and modes of this bloody slaughter, the various arts of this horrid murther, the diverse schemes of barbarous cruelty, the cunning sleights of those inhumane Butchers to delude the tender Mothers, and train the innocent Infants to their deaths. You must not expect I should decipher to you the horrible fury of that grand massacre, the terrible countenance of the savage murtherers, the gashly faces of the astonisht Parents, the affrighted postures of the amazed Kindred and Allies, the frights and flights of the little Children into holes and crannies, the sad lamentations of weeping Mothers, their disbevel'd hair, their wringing hands, their torn breasts and garments, their wild frantick garbs, their fights and strugglings to preserve their babes, the horrible screechings of the dying children, the moans and sighs and groans that filled all the corners of the streets; the cries and roarings, and yellings that even rent the Heavens. You must not think that I can tell you how those tender sucklings were some of them in a wanton cruelty danc'd upon the tops of Pikes and Spears; others dash't savagely against the walls, some thrust through with Swords, others stabb'd with Poniards, some trampled to death upon the ground, some strangled in their Cradles, some stifled in their Mothers arms, and others torn in pieces to get them thence. You cannot imagine I should express the tears, the blood, the wounds, the barbarousness, the cruelties, the confusions, the consternations, the terrors, the horrors of that day. I am not skill'd in the tracts of cruelty, nor so good an Orator to express it. Nor were it perhaps a Rhetorick for Christmas: Only, I can tell you what the Text does me, that slain they were, all the children that were in Bethlehem, and the coasts about, from two years old, and under; and Herod did it.

Not himself I confess. There are sins we are asham'd to commit our selves, as well as sins we cannot commit without company to help us. And such was this; so horrid, he was asham'd to stand by to own it; so great, he could not act it, but by involving almost an host of men in the guilt and mischief. A murther which neither the greatness of the one, nor the multitude of the other, neither his jealousies nor their obedience, neither his command, nor their trade of life shall be ever able to excuse, nor any Rhetorick ever find a plea for.

VI. But though I cannot be exact in the relation, I must needs say in the last place, Herod was in the transaction so exact, that (1.) Bethlehem he thought too narrow a Stage for this new Tragedy; he takes in all the coasts about;

about; though the *Prophet* had plainly told *Christ* should be born in *Bethlehem*, and the *Sanhedrim* had so resolv'd it to him, and his main business was to murder him: yet to make all sure, he stretches out his fury to the neighbouring towns. By the way, give me leave to observe, *Great Cities are sometimes ill neighbours*; they too often destroy our children by the contagion of their mischiefs, and ruine the young heirs of the Towns, and *Manners* that are near them, by the company that the infernal *Herod* sends out thither daily to that purpose. But I retreat, and tell you,

2. *Herod* was so exact in the designs of cruelty, that he extends the time as well as the place beyond what he had learn'd of the *Wise men*. *Christ* was now but a year old at most, (and more probably not so much.) *Herod* stretches out his design for two. What's the reason? why! the bloody man and the unjust possessor never think they are safe, till they are beyond all reason. For if *Christ* was now about two years old, why are the Children of but two days slain? if but two months or thereabouts, (as some place this business not long after his being presented in the Temple) why are the children of two years old demanded to the slaughter?

At least (3.) how comes his own Son into the number? so *Macrobius* relates the story, and *Augustus* alluded to it in his witty speech. This too, to shew us how exactly wicked some men are, that spare neither Kindred nor Children to fix themselves.

And to give you *Herod's* cruelty here full: According to the time he had diligently enquired of the *Wise men* it was also, says the *Text*. Very inquisitive about it he had been it seems, and he miss'd not a point of it: so whether *Christ* was born when first the Star appeared, or whether he was then only first incarnate and conceived in the Womb, he would be sure he thought to have him; a year under or over would be sure to reach him: so nice and punctual is the cruel and ambitious nature to defend its own interest and greatness, that it cannot rest till it have stop't all avenues and crannies of fear, and satisfied them to a nicety; and it boggles not at any age or time, or relation, or diligence, or inquisitiveness to effect it. But 'tis time now to look home.

Yet if any now should be so inquisitive to ask a reason why *God* should thus suffer these innocent Infants thus to be cruelly massacred, though we are not his counsellors, yet we may say, it might be to shew the absoluteness of his Dominion, that he is Lord of life and death, gives and disposes them as he will. It may be (2.) to teach us that innocence it self is not always a fence against death, or violence. It may be (3.) to instruct us what they must look for from the first, that have any relation to *Christ* at all. It may be (4.) it was, that by this strange accident and occasion the Birth of *Christ* might be proclaimed through the world. And yet fifthly, add but the consideration, that they were the Children of *Bethlehem* where *Christ* could get no lodging, where he was fain to make the Stable his Chamber, and the Manger his Cradle: and it will not seem unreasonable that *God* should thus punish the Fathers in their Children for it, and leave some of them scarce a Child for their houses, who would not leave him a house for his Child. But lastly, *God's* thus advancing the deaths of these little Infants into a Martyrdom, giving them the first honour to die for *Christ*, and as it were redeem his life with theirs, so early bringing them to Heaven by suffering, there is no reason of complaining; nothing to cloud

cloud our *Christmas* joys, or disturb our rejoycing. Those little ones are singing in the Heavens about the *Lamb*, *Rev. xiv. 3.* And 'twill do well that we here upon earth should sing *Blessing*, and *Praise*, and *Glory*, that God has so exalted them, and comforts us; make it one of our *Christmas Carols*, our songs of joy.

Yet somewhat to *allay* your joy, that your mirth run not too high, I shall after this long story tell you a *tale* in your ears will make them glow. *Herod* is not dead, nor *sleepeth*. We are all of us *Herods*, or *Herodias's*, men and women, *one way or other*.

We have been as deep *dissemblers* of *piety*, some among us, as ever *Herod*; many as *bloody* too, upon it. Many sad *errors* and *mistakes* have many of us made, and many a *thousand* souls have miserably *perish'd* by them. *Angry* men have been *exceeding* angry, that the *Magi*, many a wise man and good, would not comply with *their* interests and projects, or communicate with *their* sins. Angry, some I am afraid *still*, that *Christ*, that *Religion* is escap'd their fury, that *their* kingdoms are not establisht, though it was *Christ's* that was by *them* pretended, but just as the *worshipping* him was by *Herod*. And I cannot tell but there may be yet some projects of sending out to *slay men* and *children* to begin *Herod's work* anew, the *war afresh*.

But I am sure, though we cannot *reach* that mystery, there is *one* you will easily understand, shall serve for an *application* to drive all home. Our *own children* are daily murdered by us, their very *souls* destroyed: a *sadder cruelty* than *Herod's*.

Not to tell you that the *Mother* kills them often in the *womb* by the *folly* and *vanity* of a *dress*, by an unruly *humour*, by a *disordered appetite*, by a *heedless* or *giddy motion*; nor that the *nurse* kills them at the *breast* by her intemperance and *excess*, though it be too true: Yet it is a less murder, *that*, than to kill the *soul*, and yet this done oftner. And I'll assure you first, they venture their Children hard that deny them *Baptism*: I'll say *no more*. But after that they are smothered, some in their Mothers *lap*, kill'd with *kindness* and *indulgence*; stabb'd through with *poniards*, others, undone with *cruelty* and *unkindness*; trampled to death *others*, and perish by their friends *carelessness* and *neglect*. Some are *dash'd* against the *walls*, their *brains* beat out at least, wholly corrupted by false principles from their *cradles*: Some we *trail* along the streets, and destroy them by our ill *examples*; some we *choak* with *intemperances* and *excesses*, even in *Christmas* too; some we destroy our *selves*, others we send out *servants* and *companions* to destroy, give them such to tend them as teach them *pride*, and *scorn*, and *anger*, and *frowardness*, and *vanity*, and *wantonness*, e're they understand them; such as teach them to *bestow* a *curse*, e're they can *ask* a *blessing*, and to speak *ill* e're they can *well* speak. And as if we were resolved to make all sure, we send them abroad to be bred sometimes to places of *licentiousness* and *debauchery*, that they may be sure to be *gallant* sinners, because forsooth 'tis pedantick and below a *Gentleman* to be a thorow *Christian*, to suck in the *tame* and *conscientious* principles of *Christianity*; and all upon *Herod's* mistake, that *wise men* will *mock* us for them, when 'tis only that they are wisely *wicked* and *mistaken*.

And now shall we cry out of *Herod's* cruelty, and do worse our *selves*? shall we complain he kill'd the *Innocents* to day, and we make nothing *every* day to destroy even *innocency* it self? A less, far lesser cruelty it would be to take these tender blossoms and shake them off the tree, than to suffer

fer them to grow up to fruits which we can but curse our selves, and others will curse the tree from bearing them. Nay, a greater mercy it were to the poor children, to *dash* them against the *stones*, to *smother* them in the *Cradle*, to *overlay* them in the *bed*, to *dispatch* them any way *innocent* into the other world, than to *nurse* them up to our *own follies*, than to *pollute* them with our *debaucheries*, than to *corrupt* them with *atheistical* and *ungodly* principles, than to *defile* them with *lusts*, than to train them up to be wicked, or meerly vain and unprofitable, breed them up to Hell, to eternal ruine. Yet the tender and delicate woman, that can scarce endure to set her foot upon the ground for *niceness*, thus daily *murthers* her beloved *darling* without *scruple*.

But indeed, do men and women pray for Children as a *blessing*, that they may only turn them into a *curse*? only *desire* them, that they may *destroy* them? surely one would think they did so, that sees how great a *study* it is to make them *vain*, and *proud*, and *envious*, and *lewd*, and *wicked*. Our *Herods* and *Herodias's* cut off the *baptized* Infants heads, as they of old did the *Baptists*. We even *dance* them to death, and compromise them to Hell as soon almost as the *baptismal* waters are *dried* upon them. And must old *Herod* and *Herodias* only bear the blame of murdering *Innocents*, and we that do it over and over scape without an accusation? In this too, worse then *Herod*: He only slew the Children from *two* years old and under, we *under* and *above* too, from their first day upward, till we have rendred them incorrigible to age, and past recovery. The subtilest policy of the Devil, *this*, thus to kill poor Children from their infancy, when they neither know who hurt them, nor how they came in the confines of that spiritual death they dwell in; can only say, they were so dealt with in the *house of their friends*.

What shall we say my beloved, when these murther'd Children shall cry out against us, out of their miserable Cells at last (for they will do then at least as these did from under the Altar long ago) *How long, O Lord, how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that spilt it, on our Fathers, and on our Mothers, and on our friends*, that thus untimely sent us *hither*, when we might otherwise have come to thee? whither shall we turn, what shall we answer? or rather because we cannot answer, let us take heed we handle the matter so, that we come not to it. We pretend to *love* our Children, and thereupon we strive to make them *rich*, and *fine*, and *great*, and *honourable*: why do we then beggar them from their Childhood, with bringing them up to those vanities that will undo them? why do we deform them with sins and vices, lessen them with education, make them dishonourable by training them up in ignoble and dishonest principles? why do we in all these ruine them from the first? At least why do we not love our selves who (for ought I know) must needs perish *with them*, and perish *for them*, for thus destroying them?

Were we but kind to our *own* souls, we would be to *theirs*: But to fill up the measure, we play the *Herods*, and act the murtherers *lastly* upon our selves. We daily stifle those heavenly *births* of *good desires* and thoughts that are at any time begotten in us by the *Holy Spirit*, and walk on confidently to death and darknes.

But we have acted *Herods* part too long, and I fear I have been too long upon it. To be short now, let's turn our *slaughtering hands* upon our *sins* and *vices*, kill them, mortifie them, and henceforward act the part of the

the *blessed Innocents* ; set our selves from this day to better practices , study the two grand lessons of the day, *Innocence* and *Patience* ; *Innocence* in our lives , and *Patience* in our deaths , or rather patience in them *both*. Study them our selves, teach them our Children, and continually preserve them in those happy ways, that when we shall have serv'd our several generations, and go hence, we may all meet at last , *Fathers* , and *Mothers*, and *Children* at the great Supper of the *Lamb* , and together with these blessed *Innocents* in the *Text* , follow the *Lamb* for evermore. Who, &c.

THE

THE FIRST SERMON ON THE Circumcision.

2 COR. V. 17.

Old things are past away, behold all things are become new.



AS face in water answers face, so does the face of the *Text* the face of the *Church* in the times we live in, where old things are past away, all things become new. But as where the faces are like, the minds often are not so, so the sense of the *Text*, and the sense of the *Times* are as unlike as may be, however like the words be to them. Old *legal Ceremonies* and old corruptions past in the *Text*; Old corruptions, and old heresies and errors renewed in the *Times*. The glorious Gospel of Christ newly appearing with affections answerable to it in the *Text*; A Gospel I know not whose, not of Peace, but of War, not of Love and Unity, but of Faction and Schism, with affections and courses according, in the *times*. New things, such as belong to the new Man, righteousness and true holiness, passed over, as unnecessary or unprofitable, all good order antiquated and out of date, cast away as old things, all good things quite ruin'd and decay'd.

It were to be wish'd (but 'tis but merely to be wish'd, scarce hop'd, I fear) that the sense as well as the words might fit us, that the new things in the *Text*, were the new ones of the *Times*; that the old ones here, were the old ones there; That the *new year* but lately entred, might bring us this news.

But however, I may wish and hope too, I hope, that we in particular will take occasion from it to renew our hearts with the year, and begin it in newness of life and conversation; to live the new year like new men, better than of old.

And though the new *times*, as now they are, will not agree with the *Text*, no more than these new men of the times their Sermons do in words only, at the most; yet, because I love to speak seasonably as well as soberly, a *Text* in season, if I may have leave to fit the *Text* to the old

time of *Christmas*, there can be nothing more suitable to both the words and meaning of the Text, than this holy *Feast*, and the meaning of it.

From this *Feast*, from Christs birth it was that all old legal ceremonies had their pass, to pass away; from hence all things both in Heaven and earth are reconciled, by him all things made new, by him the old man abolished, and the new man created in us; the old Law abrogated, the new Law come in place; the old Law of Works annulled, the new Law of Faith established; all *old things past away, all things become new*, through his coming into the world.

And the use and moral of the whole *Feast*, and the three solemn *great days* in it, is no more than that we would let old things pass, old worldly affections die, lay off the old, and become new men all; Be (1.) regenerate in our spirits, and new born with him upon *Christmas-day*. Have our old man (2.) circumcised, our old fleshly members mortified upon *Circumcision-day*; and be wholly renewed in all our parts upon the same, as *New-years-day*. Begin (3.) the publick profession of our renovation, and new service with the *wise men, worshipping, adoring, and presenting* him our *gifts* upon the *Epiphany, or Twelfth*; so changing our old Master, and the service of sin, for our new Master and his service; forgetting the old, and pressing on to the new.

Thus you have a perfect *Christmas Text*, and more evidently a *New-years* one; yet both, both in words and sense. I have given you the whole sense of it from the *Feasts* of *Christmas*, and both told you their meaning, and the *Texts*; what the several days of the *Feast* teach you, and what all the parts of the *Text* would have you learn: of which this is the sum, That through Christ all old things, the old Law, the Law of *Moses*, the old corruptions of Nature, the law of sin are past away, done away, and abolished, and a new law established, new grace brought to us, new affections created in us; all through him, and by his coming: and that whosoever is in Christ, in whom he is come, in him old things are past away, all things are become new, he is a new creature quite, in the words that usher in the Text: so the parts of it will be *two*.

1. *What since Christs coming is become of all things? What is the state of the Gospel? And*

2. *What upon that is become of those that are in him?*

For to understand the *Text* fully, we are to consider it, (1.) as a general proposition, concerning the state of the Gospel of Christ, that *old things* in general *are past away, and all things altogether become new*, through it, and him. (2.) As a particular application made to any man that is in Christ, it is truly in that state, that in him *old things are past away, all things become new*.

1. Now in the general, *old things are past away*, that's become of them, of all old things, since Christs coming; and *all things else are become new*, that's become of them, or so are they become.

2. In particular, this is become of them in whom Christ is, or who are in him, true sons of the Gospel; *old things are past with them, and all things in them become new*.

I shall add a third, as the proper Use both of *Text* and *time* of the *old days* and the *new year*; what is most becoming us, for whom also Christ came, to whom still he daily comes, even to cast away all old corruptions, and in all things to become new.

I begin with the *Text* as it may be applied to the general state and condition of the Gospel, where we shall consider it first respectively, then abso-

absolutely: (1.) In comparison with the estate of things, both under the old Law, and under the Gentile infidelity; that the Gospel is a state where both all those old legalities are abolished, and heathen errors done away. (2.) In it self, that the Gospel is a new state of affairs and things, where *all things are become new*.

Old things, those must be first; and they may all be reduced to these two heads, God's way of dealing with the *Jews*, and his way of dealing with the *Gentiles*. With the *Jews* first, where both the old way of his *Service*, and the old way of his *Providence*, those two grand things that include all the rest, are to be examined how they pass.

His *service* consisted (1.) in *Sacrifices*, and they are done; no more blood of Bulls, or Lambs, or Goats; they could not *make the comers there- unto perfect*, Heb. x. 1. so they are gone.

His *service* (2.) consisted in outward *washings*, Heb. ix. 10. but they could wash no further than the flesh, cleanse no more then the outward man: *Not the putting away the filth of the flesh*, says S. Peter, 1 S. Pet. iii. 21. that's nothing, for that's but a vanity to stand on, vain, and to so little purpose, no wonder if that way of serving God be vanish'd too.

His *service* (3.) was much then in *meats and drinks*, Heb. ix. 10. this they might eat, and that they might not; but all to perish with the using: Why are you any longer subject to those ordinances about them? says St. Paul, Col. ii. 20, 22. *For meats for the belly, and the belly for meats, but God shall destroy both it and them*, says he again, 1 Cor. vi. 14. so they pass too.

His *service* (4.) stood much in *Holy-days, new Moons, and Sabbaths*, Col. ii. 16. but they were but shadows of things to come, *the Body is of Christ*, ver. 17. 'twas time they should be packing, when the reality of things were come.

His *service* (5.) was especially notified by *Circumcision*; but *Circumcision is nothing*, 1 Cor. vii. 19. that is passed away indeed to purpose, the greatest passing, to pass into nothing.

His *service* (6.) was confin'd to the *Temple of Jerusalem*, to that only *Altar* there: but it was but a figure, for the time then present, says St. Paul, Heb. ix. 9. and you see how the present time is past; there was no way into the holiest, ver. 8. whilst that was standing, 'twas but necessary that also should pass away, & *neque in hoc neque in illo*, the time was coming that they should neither worship in this nor that, nor that at *Gerizim*, nor that at *Jerusalem*, S. John iv. No, there should not be left so much as *one stone upon another*, says Christ, St. Mat. xxiv. 2. that's passing away indeed.

His *service* (lastly) was in a manner all *type and shadow*, Heb. x. 1. Not so much as the image of things themselves. And the shadows must needs away, when the Day-spring begins to visit us, and the Sun arises. Away shadows, get you behind us; we see our Sun of Righteousness up, and risen on us: and 'tis fit we should turn our backs upon our shadows, and worship and adore him. The *Persians* did so superstitiously to the Sun in Heaven, we must do it devoutly to the spiritual and eternal Sun of Glory.

For how much are we bound to Christ, to God in Christ, that he has freed us from those imperfect, yet costly *Sacrifices*, those troublesome abstinences, those unprofitable washings, those strict severities of *new Moons* and *Sabbaths*, that painful Rite of *Circumcision*, those long Journeys to *Jerusalem* to worship those empty shadows, and given us full perfect liberty of *meats and drinks*, and all things else; the doing whereof is no real

real profit, and brought home his *Temples* and *Service* to our doors, our happiness into our bosoms. Though all those old things be pass'd away, let not his goodness in passing them away ever pass out of our memories, nor a day pass without praises to him for it, nor the relation of it pass out of our lips without all thankfulness and humility. X

And there will be more reason for it, if we reflect now upon the course of his old *providence*, altered towards us. In the old way of his providence and dispensations with the *Jews*, He first led them only with temporal promises, fed them only with such hopes, *Deut. xxxviii.* no other to be found the whole old Bible over. We must not now look for the same dealing we; Afflictions are made our glory, *2 Cor. xii. 9.* and we blessed by them, *St. Mat. v. 11.* our hopes higher, our promises better, *Heb. viii. 2.* So let the other pass, no matter.

He awed them, secondly, with temporal punishments; they could not sin but they were presently punished for it; sometime a Plague, another while the Sword, then wild Beasts and Serpents, now Dearth and Famine, sometimes a fire from heaven, another time a gaping of the earth and swallowing all; seldom but some exemplary or sudden death, or some strange visitations, were the method God used to bring the rest into order and obedience. Such things are rare among us, whom God terrifies with the threats of future judgments, that we might have the longer time for our repentance and amendment; his providence is now much fuller of patience and long suffering to bring us to it, his anger and fierceness is passed away.

He comforted them, thirdly, by only obscure and dark Prophecies, so dark that he often that spoke them did not perfectly understand them. All those Prophecies are now plain to us, and those shadowy expressions lightened and cleared by Christ. He opened his Disciples understandings, *St. Luk. xxiv. 45.* that they might understand them, and from them we have all those former Prædictions clear as the midday Sun: Those obscure things, or the obscurity of those things, are also passed away.

Fourthly, The old way then was, *Do this and live*, a sad Covenant of Works, which yet we were not able to perform. That is done away in Christ, and the Covenant of Faith come in the room, *Iustus ex fide*, to live by that an easier way for us.

Fifthly, Gods way then with them was by Rites and Ceremonies, old things which *neither we, nor our old fathers were able to bear*, if we believe *St. Peter, Acts xv. 10.* these, to be sure, a good providence for us that they were among the things that were done away, *2 Cor. iii. 11.*

Lastly, The very subject, as we may say, of his *Providence*, is altered too. In the days of old it was commonly none but the rich and honourable, very few else that were employed in the great services of the Law, insomuch as it was a Proverb, *Spiritus Sanctus non requiescit super animam pauperis*; The holy Spirit never lights upon the poor mans soul. But now the contrary, *πτωχοὶ εὐαγγελίζονται*, the poor are preach'd to, and the poor preach too, and *Blessed are the poor*. The way of Gods dispensation is strangely changed, that old way past too.

What can we then do less than pass our selves into his *service*, under his protection? Than pass our souls and spirits out of our lips in praises and thanksgiving? That all those beggarly Elements, as the Apostle calls them, *Gal. iv. 9.* those temporal promises and threats; that heavey slavish

slavish servitude, that dealing with us as with untoward children under the rod, or as slaves and servants is past from us; that we are now at the liberty of Sons, and the honour of being the friends of God, such to whom God is now pleased in Christ to reveal his secrets and mysteries so long *hidden*, even from the beginning of the world, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Eph. iii. 9.* and into which the *Angels* desire to look into, *1 Pet. i. 13.* That he hath now revealed them unto babes, *Mat. xi. 25.* That no condition now, be it never so poor, or mean, or weak, but is made partakers of his grace and glory in the face of Jesus Christ. How great a comfort and glory is it to us, that all old things are thus past away, and all things become new? Yet there are worse old things behind, the old things of the *Gentiles*, which we are to consider now, both what they are, and how they too are past away. The old errors, and the old sins of the *Gentiles*, they are the old things of the *Gentiles*, and they are past.

1. The old heathen ignorance and error; They were in a shadow indeed, the very shadow of death, *Luk. i. 70.* a thick black darkness, the very Region of death, and Land of darkness, saith the *Prophet*; they knew not God, saith the *Apostle*, *Rom. i.* having their understanding darkened, because of the blindness of their heart, *Eph. vi. 18.* All these shadows are dispersed, all this darkness past away when *Zacharies* day spring rose upon them; they are not now what they were before Christ came, they are much enlightened.

2. Nor appear their sins now of so deep a blackness, since Christ suffered for them also. Before we read of nothing but the Idolatries, the Vanities, the Abominations of the Heathen: that they were alienated, wholly alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them, *Eph. iv. 18.* walking after their own lusts, and in the vanities of their wicked mind, being delivered up to the Prince of the air, who wholly ruled and worked in them, *Eph. ii. 2.* But these things were passed over by the mercy of God in Christ, and even they also received the new Covenant of Grace and Pardon.

And in the second place, the way of Gods Providence towards them also, as well as towards the *Jews*, past into another mode. It was in old time, but a *Job*, but an *Uriah*, but an *Ittai*, but a *Jethro*, but a *Naaman* in an Age; an *Uzzite*, a *Hittite*, a *Gittite*, a *Midianite*, a *Syrian* but now and then; *Israel* was the only *Goshen*, the only Land where the light shone free. The case is altered now by Christ. Indeed for a while, till the Children were first served, or at least first offered meat, it was, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles*, *St. Mat. x. 5.* But when Christ had now compleated his work, and was going up to heaven, then *Go and preach to all Nations* was the stile; and *Lo I send thee far unto the Gentiles*, *Acts xxii. 21.* was *St. Pauls* Commission, and others after him. So the Partition wall is now past through, and the distinction of *Jew and Gentile*, that old difference, past away.

Nay, secondly, the other branch of Gods dealing with them is so too. In those times of ignorance God winked at them, tolerated, or at least not punished them, saies *St. Paul*, *Acts xvii. 30.* But now he commandeth all men every where to repent, saies he; the old course is past, Gods way of dealing with them now is become new.

Thus we have another ground of thanks and praise, that God has not only freed us from the servitude of the Law, but from the slavery of Satan; not only from the dusky shadows of the *Jewish*, but from the dismal darkness of the *Gentile Coasts*. Let not this pass further without a Song of praise.

But

But how shall we now worthily praise him for the next, for making all things new: *Novus Rex, & nova Lex, a new King, and a new Law. Novus Grex, & novum Regnum; a new Church, and a new Kingdom. Novum Testamentum, & novum Sacramentum: new Covenants, and new Sacraments: Novum Sacrificium & novus Sacerdos; a new Sacrifice and a new Priesthood: Novum Templum, & novum Altare; a new Temple, and a new Altar. Novus Spiritus, and nova vita, a new Spirit, and a new kind of life: All new.*

1. *Novus Rex, a new King; we have no ordinary one neither: a King with an Ecce, Ecce venit, both in Prophet and Evangelist; Behold thy King cometh, says Zachary, Zach. ix. 9. and S. Matthew xxi. 5. says the same. A King worth beholding: The wise men came I know not how far to see him, S. Mat. ii. 2.*

2. And with a new Law he came, a new Commandment, S. John xiii. *A perfect Law, S. James. i. 25. A Law of liberty, chap. ii. 12. A royal Law, ver. 8. of the same Chapter, The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, Rom. viii. 2. The old Law was a bondage, this new one makes us free, as it follows there.*

3. A new Church he came to gather, much different from the old: A Church purchas'd by his Blood, a costly one, *Acts xx. 28. A glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish, Eph. v. 27. much larger than the old; an universal Church, all the Gentiles also new come in, the utmost parts of the earth, the confines of it, Psal. ii.*

4. A new Kingdom there is come too; a Kingdom above all Kingdoms, *the Kingdom of Heaven, S. Mat. iii. 2. A Kingdom of Grace, and a Kingdom of Glory; a Kingdom never heard of before Christs coming with it: no news, no hopes, no mention of the Kingdom of Heaven all the old Scripture through; those exceeding great and precious promises reserv'd for us, 2 S. Pet. i. 4. They under the Law were led like Children with the nuts and rattles of temporal promises and rewards: Christ first promis'd a Kingdom for the recompence of reward; a Kingdom too wherein we are all Kings, Rev. i. 6.*

This new Kingdom (5.) brings a new Covenant, *novum Testamentum; take Testamentum how you will, for a Covenant or a Writing; and novum either for the Covenant of Grace, or for a new Schedule of Scripture that contains it: we find both new now, Heb. ix. 15. I will make a new Covenant, says God, Jer. xxxi. 31. And he did so, says the Apostle, Heb. viii. 6. But what was it? I will put my Laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people, &c. for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more, ver. 10. 12. a Covenant of pardon and remission, such as the Sacrifices of the Law could not give, were not able. And new Books we have it written in, as authentick as those old ones in the Jewish Canon, where we may find all seal'd by the testimony of the Spirit, Heb. vi. the Author of the new Testament as well as of the old.*

6. The new Church has its new Sacraments. *Ite & Baptizata, for Ite & Circumcidite; Baptism for Circumcision, and the Lords Supper for the Passeeover; in both which of ours there is more than was in theirs, in those legal Ceremonies; not only outward signs as they, but inward graces.*

7. New Sacrifices, *the calves of our lips, instead of Calves and Goats; the sacrifices of Praises and Thanksgivings, nay the sacrifice of a contrite heart, and humble spirit, the sacrificing of our lusts, and the offering up of our souls and bodies, a living, holy, acceptable Sacrifice, Rom. xii. 1.*

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8. A new *Priesthood*, to offer them; an *unchangeable Priesthood* now, *Heb. vii. 24.* Christ our High-Priest, and the Ministers of the New Testament, *2 Cor. iii. 6.* as so many under-Priests to offer them up to God. Christ offered himself a Sacrifice, offers up also our Prayers and Praises to his Father, has left his Ministers in his Name, and Merits to do it too: and this a lasting *Priesthood*, to last for ever.

9. We have a new *Altar* too; so St. Paul, *Heb. xiii. 10.* an *Altar* that they which serv'd the *Tabernacle* have no power to eat of. Take it for the *Cross* on which Christ offered up himself; or take it for the *holy Table*, where that great Sacrifice of his is daily commemorated in Christian Churches: *Haberm,* says the *Apostle*; such an one we have, and I am sure 'tis new.

10. *Temples* we have many new; the Temples of our bodies; *1 Cor. vi. 19.* those both to offer in, and offer up: and (2.) *Churches* many, for that one *Temple* so long since buried in dust and rubbish.

11. There is above these a new *Spirit*, *Ezek. xxxvi. 26.* not the *spirit of bondage* again to fear, but the *Spirit of Adoption*; whereby we cry *Abba Father*, *Rom. viii. 15.* the spirit of love, and not of fear; the spirit of Sons, and not of Servants; a spirit that will cause us to walk in Gods Statutes, keep his Commandments, and do them, *Ezek. xxxvi. 27.* a new thing indeed, that can make the Beasts of the Field to honour him, as the *Prophet* speaks of it, *Isa. xliii. 19.* the Dragons and the Owls to do so, the most sensual, fierce, cruel, and dullest natures bow unto him, that gives waters in the Wilderness, and Rivers in the Desert, *Isa. xliii. 19. 20.* that blows but with his wind, and these waters flow, *Psal. cxlvii. 18.* this is a new spirit that is so powerful.

And from this spirit it is that we (12.) receive new life and vigour, that we walk not under the Gospel so dully and coldly as they under the Law, where the outward work to the letter serv'd the turn; but according to the spirit, in the inward purity of the heart, as well as in the outward purity of the body.

To which, lastly, there is a new inheritance annexed, a new Heaven, and a new Earth, which we may look for according to his promise, *2 St. Pet. iii. 13.*

And are not these new things all good news, worth our rejoycings? Can we be ever old that enjoy such mercies? are they not enough to revive the dying spirit, nay to raise the dead one to set forth his praises, who thus renews us as the Eagle renews his mercies to us every morning, makes us *Kings and Priests*, gives us easie Laws, and pleasing Covenants, effectual Sacrifices, and saving Sacraments; turns our bodies into his Temples, and our hearts into Altars; makes us a glorious Church, and builds us Churches; inspires us with a new Spirit, and gives us a second life, gives us a Kingdom, gives us Heaven and all? This is the new state under Christ, since his coming ended and renewed our years unto us. And therefore says our *Apostle*, just before the Text, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*; all this new work is done upon him: that's the second way we are now to consider the words, That in the Christian, truly such, all old things are past away, and all things become new.

He is dead to sin, *Rom. vi. 2.* and he is dead to the Law, *Rom. vii. 4.* or if you will, sin and the Law are both dead to him, they can hold him no longer, he is alive unto God, *Rom. vi. 11.* new created in righteousness and true holiness.

Will you have it more particular? Why first then, the Heathen ignorance and error that is past with them, they are enlightned, *Heb. vi.*
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they

they know God, and are known of him; they are light in the Lord, the very children of it. The Heathen ~~sins~~ they are past with them: in them they walkt once, *Ephes. ii. 2.* such they were some of them, *1 Cor. vi. 11.* but *now they are washt*, but *now they are sanctified*, but *now they are justified*.

Nor are they now (2.) under so slender a providence as the poor Heathen were: God visits them often now, and not only now and then, and suffers them not to go on, or fall back again into the old ways of infidelity.

But they are not only out of the *Heathen* condition, but out of the *Jewish* too; no more in bondage to the Law. The sacrificing of Rams and Goats, of all sensual affections, is done already; the unreasonable part is mortified in them; they have been washt, and need be wash'd no more; they are oblig'd to no *differences of meats*, no *Jewish Sabbatizing*, no *Circumcision*, no one particular place of Worship, no *legal Rites or Ceremonies*, Christ having *abolished in his flesh the Law of Commandments*, says *S. Paul, contained in ordinances*, *Ephes. ii. 15.* We are now at liberty, he has made us free.

And we are now (3.) under a new course of providence. God leads us now by spiritual and eternal promises, he threatens spiritual and everlasting punishments, guides us by a clearer light than Prophecie, the evidence of the Word and Spirit, ties us not up to the Covenant of Works, nor empty Ceremonies; these things are past: Makes us not rich that he may accept us, but accepts us as we are: He reckons not of us by our wealth, or honour, or learning, or our parts, we *know no man* so now, *ver. 16.* not Christ so now *according to the flesh*; we value not any man now for any thing but holiness and righteousness, for so much as he is in Christ. Nor does the Christian value himself now for any thing but for that of Christ which is in him: riches he contemns, honour he despises, learning he submits; all outward and externall priviledges and commendations he lays at the foot of Christ, devotes them to his commands; these are all old, worn, tatter'd things, not worth the taking up; nothing now worth any thing but Christ, nothing but Christ, and those new things those graces are in him.

Thus *old things are past* with the true Christian; but (2.) *all things also are become new in him*. He has a new heart, and a new spirit; he has no more a heart of stone, but a heart of flesh; a soft, tender, pliable heart, a meek and well disposed spirit, a loving spirit; he is no more what he was, the old *ego*, he has a new understanding; things look not to him as they did of old, he vilifies the world and worldly things. His affections new, he affects not what he did before; he contemns all things below: He is a King, and rules over his passions; he is a Priest, and sanctifies them with his Prayers: he lives under a new Law, the Law of the Spirit, and not the Flesh; he makes every day new Covenants with God: A Member of the Church he is, and the Kingdom of God is now within him. He is a great adorer of the Sacraments of the Church, and daily offers up himself a Sacrifice to God, his Soul and Body, and all he has, and pours out his praises. His Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and the Altar of his Heart burns with the continual fires of Devotion and Charity. He now lives no more, but Christ lives in him, that's the new life he leads, and it leads him into glory. A new thing of which he has a glimpse, and a kind of antipast here, that makes him relish nothing else, but cast all behind his back as old rags and dirt, to *press forward to the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*, *Phil.*

Phil. iii. 14. This is the new Creature, the new man, in whom old things are past away, and all things become new.

And shall *all things become new*, and not we? shall all old things pass away, and we remain in our old sins still? every thing be cloth'd with a new lustre, we only appear in our old rags still? Certainly we cannot judge it reasonable. Better use I hope we will make of this *days Text*, of this *New-years lesson*. Put off, says the *Apostle*, concerning the *former conversation*, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and put on that new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, Eph. iv. 22, 23, 24. 'Tis his counsel must be our practise. The time past of our life may suffice us, says S. Peter, 1 Pet. iv. 3. to have wrought the will of the Gentiles. It is sufficient, it is sufficient. 'Tis time now we unlearn our old lesson, unravel our old work, leave off our old course of life, and begin anew to live henceford to righteousness, and not to sin; to God, and not to men. The new entred year calls for it, the *Text* calls for it, the Blood of Christ spent at his Circumcision lately past, which yet this day (and some days still to come) commemorate, cries for it, that we would no longer count the blood of the new Covenant an unholy thing, but betake us to it, and live by it after a new fashion in newness of life. I call you not to legal washings, but the washings of Baptism and Repentance; not to Jewish Feasts, but Christian Festivals; not to sacrifice Lambs and Sheep, but your Souls and Bodies; not to old Ceremonies, but the new substance, the Righteousness of Jesus Christ. Let him now begin his new reign in you, let his new Commandment of Love be obeyed by you, his Church, purchased so dearly, not be cowardly deserted by you; keep his Covenant, frequent his Temples, adorn his Altars, reverence his Priests, follow the guidance of his Holy Spirit, when he inspires good motions into your hearts; amend your lives, and become all new men in Jesus Christ.

And when all these old things shall pass away, and the new Heaven and Earth appear, when he that sits upon the Throne, Rev. xxi. 5. shall make all things new, then shall we be all made new again, even these old decayed ruines of our bodies too, and both souls and bodies clothed with the new Robes of Glory, that shall never pass away, but be ever new, ever glorious for evermore.

THE SECOND SERMON ON THE Circumcision.

St. LUKE ii. 21.

—His Name was called Jesus.—



And to Day it was that He was called so, when eight days were accomplished for his circumcising. And they did well to call him so, for it was the Name the Angel named him before he was conceived in the womb. And he could be called by no better: For *Nomen super omne nomen*, says St. Paul of it, *Phil. ii. 9. A name it is above every name, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, Eph. i. 21.* A Name that has all things in it; that brings all good things with it; that speaks more in five letters, than we can do in five thousand words; speaks more in it than we can speak to day, and yet we intend to day to speak of nothing else, nothing but Jesus, nothing but Jesus.

The sooner then we begin the better. And to begin the sooner, we shall set upon it without either the Circumstances before or after in the verse, or the Ceremonies either of Preamble, or of Division of the words.

Only for Method sake, and memory, I shall shew you the fulness and greatness of this Name in these seven Particulars:

- 'Tis a Name of Truth and Fidelity.
- 'Tis a Name of Might and Power.
- 'Tis a Name of Majesty and Glory.
- 'Tis a Name of Grace and Mercy.
- 'Tis a Name of Sweetness and Comfort.
- 'Tis a Name of Wonder and Admiration.
- 'Tis a Name of Blessing and Adoration.

A faithful, mighty, glorious, gracious, comfortable, admirable, blessed Name it is, given Him to Day to be called by; but to be called by, and to be called upon by us for ever, that we also may be filled with the

the truth, and power, and glory, and grace, and sweetness, and wonder, and all the blessings of it. This is the sum of what we have to say of this Great Name; and now we go on with the Particulars.

A Name it is first of veracity and fidelity, of faithfulness and truth. This Jesus is but the old *Jeshua* *וְיֵשׁוּעָ* so much mentioned, so often fortold, so long expected all the Scripture thorow. The Greek termination (of *ος*) only added, that we might so understand that all those Types, Prophecies, and Promises were now terminated, and at an end in this *Ιησους* in this Jesus: the Greeks and Gentiles taken in too, to fulfill all that had been before named or spoken any way concerning him. The testimony of Jesus is the very spirit of Prophecy, Rev. xix. 10. Prophecy had neither life nor spirit without it; and the Name of Jesus is the very Amen to it, Rev. iii. 14. All the Promises of God, too, in him are yea, and in him Amen, says the Apostle, 2 Cor. i. 20. His very name is the Amen, Rev. iii. 14. The faithful and true witness in the same verse. Absolutely faithful and true, Rev. xix. 11. Nay, This same Name Jesus, from *וְיֵשׁוּעָ*, to save, was rightly given him in this sense, first, that it saved the honour of God, and the credit of his Prophets, that their words fell not to the ground, but were all accomplished and made good in his blessed Name. A good Name the while, for us to hold by, for our souls to rest on, for our hopes to anchor on, that is so faithful and true to us, will not fail us in a word or tittle.

II. And indeed it need not, for it is (2.) a Name of Power. A Name (1.) at which the Devils roar and tremble, *Jesu, thou Son of God, what have we to do with thee?* A Name (2.) that not only scares the Devils, but casts them out, and unhouses them of their safer dwellings. A Name so powerful (3.) that pronounced even by some that followed not Christ with the Apostles, St. Luke ix. 49. that were not of so confident a faith, or so near a relation to him, it yet cast them out. So mighty (4.) that in it many of those also cast out devils, did many wonderful works, St. Mat. xvii. 22. to whom he will profess he never knew them, who must therefore at last depart down to those Devils they cast out; A name, it seems, that though in a wicked mouth, has oft done wonders. So powerful (5.) that no disease or sickness, no ach or aile, no infirmity or malady could stand against it. His Name, says St. Peter, hath made this man whole whom ye see and know, Acts iii. 16. His name made that man, makes all men whole. So powerful (6.) with God himself, that he cannot stand against it, cannot deny us any thing that we ask in it. *If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it,* says Christ, St. Joh. xiv. 14. whatsoever it be, verse 13. and my Father will do it too, St. Joh. xv. 16. In a word, Jesus signifies a Saviour, and a Saviour is a name of power. He that saves either himself or others must be no weakling; The stronger man in the Gospel at least, St. Luke xi. 22. mighty to save, as the Prophet speaks, Isa. lxiii. 1. But he that saves us from the powers of darkness must be the strong and mighty God too; and so is his name, Isa. ix. 6. or the devil will be too strong for him. O thou God, who art mighty to save, save thy Servants from him; save us from all the evils and mischiefs he plots against us, that through thy Name we may tread them under that rise up against us.

III. So will this Name be glorious too: so it was, and so it is we are to shew you next, a Name of Majesty and glory.

Take it from the reason the Angel gives of the Imposition, St. Luke i. 31, 32, 33. *Thou shalt call his Name Jesus. Why? Why, he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give him the Throne of his*

his Father David; and he shall reign over the house of Judah for ever; and of his Kingdom there shall be no end. The whole together nothing, but the *Angels* comment upon the name *Jesus*, nothing but the interpretation of the name: where we consider first, that 'tis a royal name, the name of a King; not of any King neither, but a King by succession; not any new upstart King, but of a King from the lineage of ancient Kings: not of any hereditary or successive King neither, but of one from the *Kings of Judah*, *Kings of Gods* own making; none of *Jeroboams* lineage, or any others of the peoples setting up: more glorious than so. And yet more of a King, whose Kingdom shall have no end; that's a glorious King indeed. All other Kings die and leave their Kingdoms and their names behind them half wrapt up at least in dust and rubbish: this has an everlasting Kingdom, and an everlasting Name; he lives ever, and that lives so too. But of his Kingdom there shall be no end, hath another sense too. All the ends of the earth shall come in unto him, there shall be no particular end or bound of his Dominion. Upon his holy hill of Sion indeed it is God sets him, *Psal.* ii. 6. But so there, that he gives him the *Heathen* for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, ver. 8. that he may rule them thence. He is both an everlasting and an universal King. Nay lastly, the King of Kings, his Name is written so upon his thigh, *Rev.* xix. 16. So glorious a Name has he, such a *superexaltavit* there is upon it, so highly exalted is this name *Jesus*, *Phil.* ii. 9. So highly, that some Commentators and Grammarians would have it the same with the Name *Jehovah*; then surely 'tis full of Majesty and Glory: *W* only, say they, is added either to make it effable, which was before ineffable; to make it possible and lawful to be uttered, which was before scarce either; so infinite was the Majesty of that great Name: Or (2.) to intimate to us that God now is become man, *W* taken out of *Wm* which signifies a man, and put into his own Name of *Jehovah*, so making it *Jehosuah*, or *Jesuah*, which is our *Jesus*, and the Name now given us to be saved by. Whether this Criticism will hold or no, the name *Emmanuel*, which, says *S. Matthew*, was fulfilled in this of *Jesu*, so fulfilled that the *Evangelist* quotes the *Prophets* words of calling him *Emmanuel*, fulfilled in the calling of him *Jesus*, *S. Math.* i. 21, 22, 23. as if both were the same; that name (I say) has Gods Name in it to be sure; *El* is one of his, so with us it is there joyn'd; enough to render it glorious: and the *Angel* telling us in his interpretation and reason of the Name, that he was the Son of the Highest, intimates it was a Name of the highest Majesty and Glory. And what can we say upon it less than burst out with the *Psalmist* into a holy exclamation, O Lord our Governour, O Lord our *Jesus*, how excellent is thy name in all the world! It is all cloth'd with Majesty and Honour, it is deckt with light, it spreads out it self in the Heavens like a curtain, it lays the beams of its chamber in the waters, it makes the cloud its Chariot, it comes riding to us upon the wings of the wind, the Holy Spirit breaths it full upon us, it makes the *Angels* its Spirit to convey it, it makes the Ministers of it a flaming fire, it laid the foundation of the earth, it covers the deep with its wings, covers Heaven and Earth with the Majesty of its glory.

IV. Yet so it might, and we ne're the better, but that, fourthly, 'tis a Name of Grace and Mercy, as well as Majesty and Glory. *Jesus* is a word of which I may more justly say, as *Tully* says of the *Greek* *Σωτηρ* that it contains so much *ut Latino uno verbo exprimi non possit*, It cannot be expressed in any one Latin or English word, or any one indeed besides it self. Mercy and Grace dwell in it; it engrosses all; and without it there is none any where to be found,

found; no Mercy out of *Jesus*, no Grace but from *Jesus*, no Name under heaven given by which we can be saved, but the Name of *Jesus*, *Acts* iv. We are Baptized in the Name of *Jesus*, *Acts* xix. 5. We receive remission of our sins in the Name of *Jesus*. Ye are justified in the Name of the Lord *Jesus*, *1 Cor.* vi. 11. Ye are sanctified in the Name of the Lord *Jesus*, in the same verse. We are glorified by the Name of *Jesus*, in that Name we live, in that name we die. To *Jesus* it is we run for grace and assistance whilst we live. To *Jesus* we cry for Grace and Mercy when we die. To *Jesus* we commit our spirits when we breath them out. We can neither live nor die without our *Jesus*.

Thy name, says the Spouse, is oymntment poured forth, *Cant.* i. 3. Now *Qyl* has three special uses; for light, for meat, for medicine. We have all in *Jesus*, (1.) He is the light that lighteth every one that comes into the world, *St. John* i. 9. (2.) He's the meat that never perishes, *S. John* vi. 27. and feeds us up to everlasting life, *S. John* vi. 54. (3.) He's the cure and medicine of all our maladies. He wants nothing that has *Jesus*, and he has nothing that wants him.

Omnia Jesus nobis est si volumus, &c. says *St. Ambrose*. *Jesus* is all things to us if we will. *Curari desideras medicus est*, *si febris astuas fons est*, *si gravaris iniquitate justitia est*, *si auxilio indiges virtus est*, *si mortem times vita est*, *si ire desideras via est*, *si tenebras fugis lux est*, *si cibum appetis alimentum est*. Dost thou want health? he is the great Physician. Art thou fried in the flames of a burning Fever? he is the well-spring to cool thy heat. Art thou over-laden with thine iniquity? he is thy righteousness to answer for thee. Dost thou want help? he is ever ready at hand to succour thee. Art thou afraid of death? he is thy life. Wouldst thou fain be going any whither? he is the way. Art thou in darkness and fearest to stumble? he is a light to thy feet, and a lanthorn to thy paths. Art thou hungry, or thirsty? he is nourishment, and food, and meat, and drink, the truest. What is it that thou desirest, that he is not, that this name will not afford thee? Why, it heals our sicknesses, it supports our infirmities, it supplies our necessities, it instructs our ignorances, it defends us from dangers, it conquers temptations, it inflames our coldnesses, it lightens our understandings, it rectifies our wills, it subdues our passions, it raises our spirits, and drives away all wicked spirits from us; it ratifies our petitions, it confirms our blessings, and crowns all our prayers. In this name they end all that end well, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. In thy name, O blessed *Jesus*, we obtain all that we obtain, through it we receive all that we receive; so that say we may well with that holy Father, *Jesus meus & omnia*, *Jesus meus & omnia*, *Jesus* is my all, *Jesus* he is and all. I have nothing else but him, I will have nothing else but him, and I have all if I have him.

V. And well may we now say fifthly, 'tis a name of sweetness and comfort too, a sweet name indeed: oymntment we told you it was, and a sweet oymntment it is, that fills all the house with its precious odour; infomuch as it makes the Virgins therefore love thee, says the Spouse there, in the fore-cited place of the *Canticles*, *Mel in ore*, *in aure melos*, *in corde subilus*, says *S. Bernard*, 'Tis honey in the mouth, 'tis musick in the ear, 'tis melody in the heart. The soul, and all its powers; the body, and all its members, may draw sweetness thence. O how sweetly sounds the Name of *Jesus* or a Saviour to one in misery, to one in danger, to one in any calamity or distress! how does it rejoyce the heart, and quicken the very bones! *Gyra & regyra*, *versa & reversa*, says the devout *S. Bernard*, *& non invenies pacem vel requiem nisi in solo Jesu*. *Quapropter si quiescere vis pone Jesum ut signaculum super cor tuum*, *quia tranquillus ipse tranquillat omnia*. Turn you, and turn you again

again, which way you will, which way you can, you can never find such peace and quiet as there is in *Jesus*, you will find none any where but in him. If you would fain therefore lay you down to rest in peace and comfort, set the seal of *Jesus* upon your heart, and all will be quiet: no dreadful visions of the night shall affright you, no noon days trouble shall ever shake you. In the midst of that terrible storm of stones about *St. Stevens* ears, he but looking up and seeing *Jesus*, falls presently into a quiet slumber, and sweetly sleeps his last upon a hard heap of pebbles, more pleasantly than upon a Bed of Down or Roses. For 'tis remarkable that the holy *Martyr* there calls out upon the *Name* of *Jesus* rather than that of *Christ*, as if that only were the name to hold by in our last and greatest agonies. Nor is it to be forgotten that this *Name* was set upon the *Cross*, over our Saviours head, to teach us that 'tis a *Name* which set upon the head of all our *Crosses* will make them easie; the thought of *Jesus*, the reference to that holy *Name*, the suffering under that, will give both a sweet odour, and a pleasant relish to whatever it is we suffer. This looking unto *Jesus*, as the *Apostle* advises, *Heb. xii. 2, 3.* will keep us from being weary, or fainting under them, will make us conquerours, more than conquerours, *Rom. viii. 37.* sure of our reward to sweeten all: For neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in *Christ Jesus*, *ver. 38, 39.* This same *Jesus* at the end fixes and fastens all: the love of God in *Jesus* will never leave us, never forsake us: keep but that devoutly in our hearts, and piously in our mouths, and we need fear nothing. Come what can, it sweetens all. Methinks *St. Paul* seems to find a kind of delight and sweetness in the very repeating it, he so often uses it, begins and ends his *Epistles* with it, garnishes them all through with it, scarce uses the very name of *Christ* without it; as if it even sweetned that, at least made it sweeter, and made the Oyl and Chrism with which *Christ* himself was anointed, run more merrily and freely to the very skirts of his clothing. So that now, is there any one sad? let him take *Jesus* into his heart, and he will take heart presently, and his joy will return upon him. Is any one fallen into a sin? let him call heartily upon this *Name*, and it will raise him up. Is any one troubled with hardness of heart, or dulness of spirit, or dejection of mind, or drowsiness in doing well? in the meditation of this *Name Jesus*, a Saviour, all vanish and flie away. Who was ever in such fear that it could not strengthen? who in any danger that it could not deliver? who in so great anxiety that it did not quiet? who in any despair that it could not comfort and revive? That we are not sensible of it is our own dulness and experience. If we would but seriously meditate upon it, we should quickly find it otherwise. Nothing would please us where this *Name* were not; No discourse would please us where it was not sometimes to be heard; No writings delight us if this *Name* were left out. All the sweetest *Rhetorick*, and neatest eloquence would be dull without it; our very prayers would seem imperfect which ended not in this very *Name*. Our days would look dark and heavy which were not lightned with the *Name* of the Son of Righteousness; Our nights but sad and dolesom which we entred not with this sweet *Name*, when we lay down without commending our selves to God in it. Our very years would have been a thousand times more unhappy than even those which we have seen of late, would be nothing but trouble, discontent, and misery, did they not begin in this *Name*, were they not yearly usher'd in under the protection of it. Were not this, His *Name* was called *Jesus*, proclaimed to

Exactly the same
of *Abp. Leighton*

Rom. 16

16. 20. 21. 22. 23.

to day, to begin it with, we might call the year what we would, but good we could not call it. This setting forth *Jesus* a Saviour in the front, is that which saves us all the year through, from all the unlucky and unfortunate days that men call in it. All the ill Aspects of Heaven, of all the Stars and Planets grow vain and idle upon it, and our days run sweetly and pleasantly under it. The *Psalmist* seems thus to prophesie and foretell it, *Psalm* lxxv. 12. *Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy clouds drop fatness.* This day crowns the year, this Name crowns the day, all our dwellings would be but a sad wilderness all the year without it, but they rejoyce, and laugh, and sing, Hills and Vallies too, being thus blest in the entrance of the year with this happy Name. I end this point (though so sweet that I part with it unwillingly) with a stave or two of devout *Bernards* Jubile or Hymn upon it.

*Nil canitur suavius, auditur nil jucundius,
Nil cogitatur dulcius, quam Jesus Dei filius, &c.
Jesus dulcedo cordium, Fons vivus, lumen mentium,
Excedens omne gaudium, & omne desiderium.
Nec lingua valet dicere, nec litera exprimere,
Expertus potest credere, quod sit Jesus diligere.*

There is nothing sweeter to be sung of, nothing more delightful to be heard, nothing more pleasant to be thought of than this *Jesus*. *Jesus* the delight of hearts, the light of minds, above all joy, above all we can desire; the tongue cannot tell, words cannot express; only he that feels it can believe what sweetness is in *Jesus*. A long song he makes of it: It would not be amiss that we also made some short ones, some ejaculations and raptures now and then upon it. Give us but a taste and relish of the sweetness of thy blessed Name, O *Jesus*, and we shall also sing of it all the day long, and praise thy Name forever and ever, and sing with the same Father, *Jesu Decus Angelicum, in aure dulce canticum, in ore mel mirificum, in corde nectar calicum*, O *Jesu*, thou joy and glory of Men and Angels, thy Name is Musick in our ears, honey in our mouths, heavenly nectar to our hearts, all sweetness, all pleasure to us throughout, wonderful sweet.

VI. Nay, wonderful in all, for'tis a Name of wonder and admiration. *Wonderful* is one of the names the Prophet calls him by, *Isa. ix. 6*. And *Cabalistical* wits have pickt wonders out of it from every letter in all three languages.

In the *Hebrew* there are four letters י ו ו and ׀, and from the signification of these letters rise the mystery. *Jod* signifies a hand, *Schin* a tooth, *Vau* a nail or hook, and *Ain* an eye: the hand is the instrument of power, the teeth one of the instruments of voices and words, the nail an instrument in his passion, and the eye an instrument or great discoverer of mercy and pity. By all these he is our *Jesus*; by his power he overthrew our enemies, which would have slain us; by his word he revives our souls when they were slain and dead: by his Passion he redeemed us from our sins, and for his own mercy sake he did all these.

In the *Greek* there are six letters Ι Ν Ο Ο Υ Ι, which according to the old device of vailing names in numbers, amount to the number of 888. the first letter is 10. the second 8. the third 200. the fourth 70. the fifth 400. and the last 300. which put all together, make up that number: and by reason that eight is the number they say of the Resurrection, that falling out the eighth day, the day after the *Sabbath*, which is the se-

venth, include this Mystery, That in *Jesus* is our rest and Resurrection, to eternal quiet. The name of *Antichrist* is covered in the *Revelation* under the number of 666. Now the six days are days of labour, pain, and trouble; the seventh is but a short day of rest whilst we are here, 'tis only the eighth day that follows after all, which must close up all in everlasting glory, free from all labour, pain, and trouble; and this is found in no other name, than in the *Name* of *Jesus*, nor given us in any other. And that it may not pass for a meer fancy, the *Cuman Sybills* verses thus foretold his *Name* many years before.

*Tunc ad mortales veniet mortalibus ipsis,
In terris similis natus patris omnipotentis
Corpore vestitus, vocales quatuor autem
Fert, non vocalesque duas, binum geniorum.
Sed quæ sit numeri totius summa docebo,
Namque octo monades, totidem decades super ista,
Atque hecatontadas octo, infidis significabit
Hominibus nomen. Tu veramente teneto.*

There shall come, says she, into the earth the Son of the Almighty Father, clothed with flesh like unto us. Four Vowels and two Consonants shall his name consist of, and the number of them be, eight unites, eight tens, and eight hundred, that is, 888. So here's wonder upon wonder, to make it wonderful.

3. In the Latin we have five letters, *J E S U S*, and by the old short way of writing among the Romans, of the first letter for the whole word, the subtle fanciers of the *Cabala* will tell us these five letters in the *Name* of *Jesus* intimate the fulness of its perfection, that it is *jucundum*, *efficax*, *sanctum*, *verum*, *salutiferum*, that it is full of joy, efficacy, sanctity, verity, and salvation. Thus you see we have so rendred it as to find the *Mystery* in English name, that it is a sweet and joyful Name, an efficacious and powerful Name, a sanctifying and justifying Name, a Name verifying all Types, and Prophecies, and Promises, and a salutiferous and saving name too. Five glories to himself, five benefits to us by it; or as I may have otherwise as fully exprest them, Justification, Election, Sanctification, Victory, and Salvation.

And now let the *Jew* come with his *Rasche Theboth*, with his first letter for a word, and write י for *Jesus*; meaning thereby maliciously ימח שמו חכרי *Let his Name be blotted out*: it will fall upon himself. His name will surely be blotted out of the *Book of Life*, who goes about to abuse this, or who has not his portion in the *Name* of *Jesus*.

I should add one Mystery more, ו which is in the *Hebrew Name* of *Jesus* is, say they, a letter with three equal fangs joyn'd all together, and may denote the *Trinity*, where the three Persons are equal and all united. And then we have a mysterious *Name* indeed, the whole God-head, *Trinity in Unity* in it; and yet a ׀ besides (as we told you before) for the Humanity. So a perfect Saviour of both Natures, exprest perfectly in his *Name*. God and Man, and all the whole *Trinity* employed in the business of our salvation. A wonderful *Name* indeed.

But (2.) 'tis also wonderful without a *Cabala*, full of plain wonders, as well as of mysterious.

1. 'Tis a new *Name*, and yet *Joshuah* the Prince, and *Josuah* the Priest, and *Joshua*, or *Jesus* the Son of *Syrach* had the same name all; and is it

not

not then a wonder that it should yet be new? But theirs were given them by men, this him by an *Angel*. Theirs signified only a temporal deliverance, this spiritual and temporal both: theirs a particular, this a general salvation: Theirs lastly, meerly signified, this very name effects also our salvation and deliverance.

2. *A name that no man knew* but himself, *Rev. xix. 12.* No man can tell the wonders of it. No man can pronounce it right neither, without an immediate assistance from above, *1 Cor. xii. 3.* *No man can say, the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost.*

3. The wonders that are wrought by it make it truly wonderful, that in it, or by it, or through it, such mighty things both are and have been done, even by men that only outwardly profess it, and only sounded the letters of it, as you have heard already.

'Tis wonderful (lastly) sure, that it should force even the Devils to bow down to it; not only depart their Lodgings to give it room, but even be compelled themselves to worship it: yet so we find it, *Phil. ii. 10.* Those things under the earth, that is, the Devils also, so doing and confessing.

And shall we now think much to do as much, to do what all things in Heaven, and Earth, and under it, even in Hell too, do to it? bow the knee and worship it? It is a *Name*, says the *Apostle*, given him to that purpose, for us to pay our duty and homage to, *ver. 9.* 'Tis a *Name* of blessing and adoration, says our last point, *Venerandum nomen Jesu*, a *Name* to be blessed and adored.

First then, bless we God for his holy *Name*, for the benefits and comfort we receive by it.

Bless we (2.) the *Name* it self, praise, and magnifie, and glorifie, and give thanks unto it. They are the expressions of the *Holy Pen*, *Psal. cxlv. 2.* *cxxxviii. 2.* *lxxxvi. 9.* *cxl. 13.* they are not mine: so you have authority enough to do it, if you think the Holy Ghost knows how to speak.

Bless we (3.) our selves in this *Name*, when we lie down, and when we rise up; when we go out, and when we come in: for in thy *Name*, O blessed *Jesu*, shall we tread them under, that rise up against us: Nothing shall be able to hurt or damage us, when we put our selves under the protection of it. If afflictions and troubles press hard upon thee, and embitter all thy days, this *Name* is the tree whose wood will sweeten the bitterest waters, cut down a branch of it and throw it in. Do thy sins and conscience rent and tear thee? this *Name* is the Oyl to lenifie and cure them, pour it out upon them. Art thou to encounter death it self? in this *Name* thou shalt overcome it, deliver up thy soul but in it. 'Tis a *Name* of truth and fidelity; thou canst not distrust it. 'Tis a *Name* of might and power, thou mayest rest upon it. 'Tis a *Name* of Majesty and glory, thou must exalt it. 'Tis a *Name* of Grace and Mercy, thou must praise him for it, and commit thy self unto it. 'Tis a *Name* of sweetness and comfort, thou must rejoyce and be glad in it. 'Tis a *Name* of wonder and admiration, thou must admire and declare it. 'Tis a *Name* of adoration, thou must now adore it too.

Bow the knee, says the *Apostle*, or bow down at it. *Holy and reverend is his Name*, says the *Psalmist*, *Psal. cxi. 9.* And if reverend, it may be rever'd, it may be worshipped. I speak not of the syllables and letters, but of the sense. When we hear the *Name* of *Jesu*, I suppose there is none so little Christian but that he will confess, I may lift up my heart and praise him for the mercy and benefits that I remember, and am put in mind of

by it; and where I bow my soul, may I not bow my body? The *Text* is plain enough, *That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow*, Phil. ii. 10. Should, though they do not, or else shall when they will not; and where they would not, when they come among those that are under the earth: and was ever more need to do it than in an age where 'tis doubted whether he be or God or Saviour? where it is question'd so often, whether there were ever such a *Name* to be sav'd by, and we not rather sav'd every one in his own? Is it not high time to revive this honour to it, that the world may know we acknowledge him to be God, to be the Lord, and are not ashamed to confess it? But to sift the matter, and speak home, Is this doing any other, than only one particular way of praising, glorifying, and magnifying of the *Name*? and are not all the Scriptures expressions so for doing that, and for declaring it? and is this any more? How ordinary are the phrases of exalting, and blessing, and praising, and sanctifying of his *Name*, and making of it to be glorious, of a *glory due to his Name*, Psal. xxix. 2. of the honour of his *Name* to be sung forth, Psal. lxvi. 2. And sure the Scripture knows how to speak. And though the *Name* of *Jesus* be not I confess directly and immediately meant in those places, but the *Name* of God; yet thus much we have certain thence, that (1.) the honour done to his *Name*, be it by words or any expression else, (for all our outward expressions have the same ground and reason) are duties of the *Text*: And that (2.) the *Name* of *Jesus* being now the *Name* of God, it can be no superstition to do the same to that. Now the Jews, I must tell you, never mentioned the *Name* of God without an adoration, and a *Benedictus*; when ever they mentioned it, they bowed themselves, and added always, *Blessed for ever*, or *blessed for evermore*, as you have St. Paul, Rom. i. 25. 2 Cor. i. 3. Ephes. i. 3. 1 Pet. i. 3. 2 Cor. xi. 21. 1 Tim. vi. 15. nay, doing no less to the *Name* of Christ, Rom. ix. 5. mentioning him there with the same words after it. So that it is but reasonable to suppose the Christians should do as much to the *Name* of *Jesus*, thereby to possess themselves that he was God, and to possess others against those ~~rising~~ Heresies that were then starting up to rob him of the honour of his God-head. And I cannot but fear that such as obstinately deny this worship to it, do as inwardly grudge at that Article of Faith that believes him to be God; and are little better in their hearts than old *Arians*, or new *Socinians*, or well looking towards them. But I add no more, only remember you, that we daily cry out in the *Te Deum*, *we worship thy Name ever, world without end*: and if we do not, why do we say so?

But say that or not, say good of it however I hope we will; and as David's phrase is, *Speak good of his Name: omnia bona dicere*, say all the good, speak of all the good we receive by it.

Say good of it, and make others (3.) say good of it; not give others occasion to speak ill of it, to blaspheme that holy *Name* by which we are called; not blaspheme it our selves, neither by our words nor by our actions; not blaspheme it by Oaths and Curses, not blaspheme it by our evil lives, not use it irreverently, not speak of it slightly, not cause others to say, Lo, these are your *Christians*, these your professors to worship *Jesus*, men that cannot so much as speak well of his *Name*, which they pretend to be saved by! Carry our selves we will I hope as men that have a portion in *Jesus*, a share in salvation.

Praise his *Name* (4.) and give thanks to it; that sure no body will deny him, praise and thanks for what he has done by it.

And

And (5.) love his *Name* we must too, love to think of it, love to be speaking of it. 'Tis reported of the holy *Ignatius*, that the *Name of Jesus* was so frequently in his mouth, that it was even found written in his heart when he was dead, found written there in golden Characters: And 'tis affirmed by good Authors. Oh that this sweet *Name* were written in our hearts too while we are living; that it were daily meditated upon, and heartily lov'd by us as it should.

We would then (6.) call upon it oftner than we do, be ever calling on it. We have a promise to be heard for whatever we ask in it, *St. John* xiv. 13, 14. And we have an authentick example, *Christs* first Martyr, so to do, *Acts* vii. 59. Be we not afraid then of the tongues of foolish men, but open we the morning, and shut in the evening with it, begin and end our days with it in our mouths.

Nay lastly, begin and end all our works and actions with it, *do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*, *Col.* iii. 17. *whatsoever we do in word or deed*, says the *Apostle* there: we can neither begin nor end better. How sweet is the *Name of Jesus*, or a Saviour, at the on-set of our work, to save and keep us from all miscarriage in it! How sweet is it again when we have done, if we can say *Jesus* again, that we have sav'd by it, been saved in it, and shall one day be saved through it; that *Jesus* runs through all with us! So then remember we to begin and end all in *Jesus*; the New Testament, the Covenant of our Salvation begins and ends so. *The generation of Jesus*, so it begins; *and come Lord Jesus*, so it ends. May we all end so too, and when we are going hence, commend our spirits, with *St. Stephen*, into his hands; and when he comes, may he receive them, to sing Praises and *Allelujahs* to his blessed *Name*, amidst the *Saints* and *Angels*, in his glorious Kingdom for ever.

THE

THE FIRST SERMON ON THE EPIPHANY.

St. MAT. ii. 11.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary his Mother, and fell down and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrhe.



Day, this, of the luckiest Aspect; a Text, this, of the happiest success that ever Travellers met with: Never had Journey better success, never pains more happily bestowed, than in the Text, and on the Day. Christ, the end of all our travel, the full reward of all our pains, was here this Day found by the Wise men after a twelve days Journey. And what wise man would not think himself well paid for all his labour, were it not so many days, but years; not so many years, but ages; so that after all he might bless his eyes with this happy sight?

Well may these fortunate Travellers in thankfulness fall down and worship, and offer presents. Wise men could do no other: and we, if we be wise, will do no less. For ordinary and common blessings we bend our knees, and present our offerings to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; but for the Lord Jesus Christ himself, 'tis not bending, but falling down; not offering of all praises only, but praises and offerings of all, our selves, and all we have, which can any way look like a thankfulness correspondent to so great a benefit.

This is a mercy not to be forgotten, this Day, especially so falling out, affordeth us by its double holiness, as our Lords Day, and our Lords Epiphany, an invincible occasion to remember and praise him in it.

Double holiness said I: trebble I may say, and more. Three Epiphanies the Church reckons upon this Day. Christ, three sundry and divers ways manifested to the world. (1.) The first to the wise men, Strangers, and Gentiles,

tiles, by a *Star*. (2.) The second to the *Jews* by a *voice from Heaven*; and the *Holy Ghost* descending thence in form of a *Dove* upon him at his Baptism. (3.) The third to his own Country-men of *Galilee*, at the Marriage at *Cana*, by his *first Miracle*. All three commemorated upon this *Day*; the first in the *Gospel*, the other two in the two second *Lessons for the Day*.

Of these we have pitched upon the first, as most concerning us, who once were *Gentiles* as well as they, who this *Day*, by the conduct of a *Star*, were brought into the house, and into the presence of their *new-born King and Saviour*. We then, as men concerned in these first fore-runners of our Faith, the first-fruits of us *sinners of the Gentiles*, are to take notice of their good behaviour, as well as their good fortune; as well how they carried themselves to *Christ* when they had found him, as how they found him; as well how they carried themselves towards *Christ*, as how they were brought to him.

Four points we have of it: *They came, They saw, They worshipped, They offered*. This is the sum of this *Days* solemnity, of the *wise mens* Religion, and should be of ours. Such service was done then, such service is due still to *Christ the Saviour*.

So four parts we have of the Text.

1. The *wise mens* coming, *And when they were come into the house*.
2. Their seeing, *They saw the Child with Mary his Mother*.
3. Their worship, *They fell down and worshipped*.
4. Their offering, *When they had opened their treasures, they presented to him gifts, Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrhe*.

Their coming, their seeing, their worshipping, their offering, are the parts of the Text, and shall be of my comment and discourse. I enter first upon their *Intrantes*, and *when they were come into the house*. Their coming, that first; where we are to consider: (1.) The parties, *who*. (2.) Their coming, *what*. (3.) Their place, *whither*.

Who they were, the *first verse* expresses, *wise men from the East*. Wise men, and come so far to see a Child in his Mothers arms! certainly either the Child is some extraordinary great personage, whose birth also much concerns them, or they have lost their wits, to take so long and troublesome a Journey to so little purpose. A great personage indeed, and this the wisest act that ever yet they did in all their lives. The *King of the Jews* they stile him, the *Messiah* they meant; one indeed that should be *born King of the Jews*, but should be made *King of the Gentiles* too. *In him shall the Gentiles trust, saith the Prophet*; rule over them as well as those he should, protect and save them too from their enemies, out of the hands of all that hate them. And to get interest in him betimes, to get to be among the first of those that submit to him, and bring him presents, was the wisest piece of all the wisdom of either *East or West*.

Wise men the *Scripture* calls them, *wise men* this act proves them, had they never done any thing wise before; and *Wise men* they shall ever be in holy Language (whatsoever the world esteem or style them) who at any time think no pains or cost too much to come to *Christ*, to come and worship him.

Μάγοι, the *Greek* names them. A word which latter ages have always, or most commonly taken in the worse sense, for men addicted to unlawful Arts, as we sometimes in our own tongue also call such *Wise men*, whom we deem little better than *wizards*. The word had not that acceptance from the first, 'twas time, and some mens ill practices that corrupted it; but be it what it will, this we may learn by it, that (1.)
God

God, *qui suaviter disponit omnia*, the sweet disposer of all things, does often draw a testimony to his truth, even from the mouth of falshood, makes even the Devils to confess it. That (2.) he sometimes calls men to himself by the violence of their own principles, be they true or false; makes some Star or other sometimes guide those great doaters on *Astrology* beyond what is right; as here, to *Christs Cradle*; so at other times to his *Chair*, to learn of him, and become Disciples: makes them sometimes burn their Books to study his: Makes the Heretick sometimes to confute himself by his own wandring principles into the truth again; makes the perverse and obstinate man weary himself at last into Christian meekness and moderation, by the wearisomness of his own perverseness. Thus the wisest may be caught in his own net e're he is aware (if God please to do him so much good) and wound into a truth or a piece of piety, which he so much struggled to avoid. Nay (3.) by these *wise mens* coming, such kind of wise-men from the *East*, you may see there is no sin so enormous, of so orient a dye; no practice or trade of it so strong, though taken up at the *East*, or Sun-rise of our days, which Grace cannot overcome; no sinner so great from the *East* to the *West*, but the Grace of *Christ* can either draw, or win, or catch, or force to him.

Antiquity delivers these *Wise men* for Kings, or some great personages to us. *Magi* both in *Persia* and *Arabia* was a name of honour, and the men *Princes* at the least. So that, as before we told you, sinners, great sinners, might by their example come to *Christ*; God often brought them: So we now must tell you, that persons of honour, the greatest persons must not think much of a little pains, or a few days Journey upon *Christs* errand, or to do him service, nay, but to pay their worship to him. He that shall consider our days, and our addressees now to God and his Son *Christ*, and compare them with what these *wise men* did here, will say, we are the Heathen, these the Christians; we, meer *Arabians*, strangers from the Covenant of Grace, men born and bred in the Wilderness of *Arabia*, where there is nothing but perpetual drought, no heavenly shower of grace ever comes: these only Believers. We the great persons that *Christ* himself must wait upon, if he will be seen; these the humble servants that will undertake any thing to see him.

And here it seems (if we now secondly examine their coming) they thought much of no pains or care to find him out. They came into the house.

Many a weary step had they trod, many a fruitless question had they askt, many an unprofitable search had they made to find him; and behold yet they will not give over. Twelve days it had cost them to come to *Jerusalem*, through the *Arabian Desarts*, over the *Arabian Mountains*, both *Arabia Deserta* & *Petrea*; the difficulty of the way, through Sands, and Rocks; the danger of the passages, being infamous for Robbers, the cold and hardness of a deep Winter season, the hazzard and inconvenience of so long, so hard, so unseasonable, so dangerous, and I may say so uncertain a Journey, could no whit deter them from their purpose: to *Jerusalem* they will through all these difficulties. But after all this pains, to lose the Star that guided them, to hear nothing at *Jerusalem* of him they sought, to be left after all this at a loss in that very place they only could expect to find him, and hear nothing there but a piece of an obscure Prophecie without date or time, to be left now to a meer wild-goose search, or a new Knight-errantry, and yet still to continue in their search, is an extream high piece both of Faith and Love, that considers

no difficulties, that thinks much of no pains, that, maugre all, will set afresh upon the pursuit, that will be overcome with nothing, is resolved, come what will, to find what they believe and desire; such a piece of faith and love that we later *Christians* cannot *Parallel*.

How would a Winter journey scare us from our faith? A cold, or rainy morning will do it; a little snow, or wind, or rain, or cold will easily keep us from coming to the *house* where *Jesus* is, from coming out to *worship him*. How would so long a voyage make us faint to hear of it? How would the least danger turn us back from the *House of God*? Alas! should it have been our cases, which was theirs here, if we could not presently have found him at *Hierusalem*, the *Royal City*, or had we lost the *Star* that led us, how had we sate down in sorrow, or returned in despair? We would have thus reasoned with our selves. Alas! we are come hither, and have lost our labour: Certainly, had this *King* been born, it would have been in the *Royal City*, or there certainly the news had been; but there we hear of no such matter, there neither any believes, or regards, or thinks of such a birth: What then do we do here enquiring, seeing his own people so much neglect it? Surely the *Star* that led us hither was but a false fire of fancy, and we are quite misled: Nay, and it appears no more, so that if we would still go on our wandrings, we know not whither, we had best return. Thus should we have reasoned our selves from *Christ*, fainted, and given over quite. 'Tis the fashion with us thus to reason our selves out of our Devotion and Religion. 'Tis the fashion too, to object any thing to save our pains in *Christ's* business. Others Customs, or others Negligences, or others Ignorance, are sufficient excuses to authorize ours: and if perchance we want a guide (though every man now thinks himself sufficient to guide and direct himself in all Points of his Religion, yet even this he cares not for, this he refuses and rejects) shall yet serve him for an excuse for his negligence and irreligion: nay, God himself shall sometimes bear the blame, his taking away, or else not giving us a *Star* and light to guide and lead us; his not giving us sufficient grace, shall be pretended the cause why we come not to him. When, did not our own coldness more chill our joynts than the cold of Winter; were we not afraid of every puff of wind when we are called to do any good; did not the fear of I know not what, only fancied and imagined dangers, make us cowards in our Religion; did we not fondly reason our selves out of our patient expectance of *Christ*; did we not guide our selves more by the Fashions, Customs, and Ignorances of others, than by the constancy of that which is only just and good; did we not forsake our guides, while we prefer our own carnal reasons, interests, and respects, and lose the *Star*, the Guide that heaven had sent us to conduct us, by going to *Hierusalem*, by addicting our selves to the vanity and fashion of Court and City, by asking counsel of *Herod*, of *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, meer Politicians and Pretenders of Piety and Religion, or *Jewish Priests*, men addicted wholly to their own way, to *Judaizing observations*, *Judaizing Sabbatizing Christians*; were it not for these our doings and compliances with flesh and blood, the *Star* would not fail to guide us, Gods grace would shine unto us, *the day-star would arise in all our hearts*, and conduct us happily and safely too into the *house* where we should truly find *Christ*. The truth is, if our coming to *Christ*, if our Religion may cost us *nothing*, nor pains, nor cost, nor cold, nor heat, nor labour, nor time, nor hurt, nor hazard, nor enquiry, nor search, then it may be we will be content to give *Christ* a visit, and en-

tain his *Faith and Worship*, but not else ; if it may not be had, nor *Christ* come to without so much ado, let him go, let all go ; so we may sit at ease and quiet in our warm nests, come of *Christ's worship*, and of his *house* what will.

Yet thither it is (3.) to his *house* that these *Wisemen* make with all their eagerness. Many stately Buildings, and Royal Palaces, no doubt, they had seen by the way, fitter far for a *King* to be born in than the *Inn* they found him in ; but at these they stay not ; *they* and *their Star* rest not any where but at this *house* ; here indeed they may, both heaven and earth, set up their rest ; this *house* truly the *house of God*, which now contained the *God of heaven and earth*.

To teach us that we are not to look to outward appearances, nor judge always according to sight. *Christ* may lie in the poorest Cottage, in the meanest *Inn*, as soon as in the highest Palace : Nay, in the low humble soul, in the Beggars soul as well as in the Kings, whose bodily presence, as *St. Paul* speaks, is weak, and whose speech contemptible, you shall sooner find him, than under the gilded roofs of a vain-glorious virtue, on a self-conceited and boasted Religion and Piety.

Indeed where ever the *Star* stands, whatever house the heavenly light encompasses, there must we alight and enter ; we must not think much of the meanest dwelling that heaven points out, of the poorest condition that God designs us to. That house is glorious enough that *Christ* is in ; that habitation and condition happiest, how poorly soever it appear, which the finger of *God* directs us to, and the light of his countenance shines on and encompasses. O my soul ! enter there always, O my soul, where God points out unto thee, where the heavenly light shines over thee, however earth look on thee : Thou shalt find more contentment in a *Stable*, amongst beasts, in the meanest employment, than in the highest Offices of state and honour ; in an *Inn* amongst strangers, than with thy brethren and kinsfolk at home ; in a thatcht Hovel, in the poorest, hardest lodging, meanest dwelling, and lowest condition, than in the fairest house, the sweetest seats, the softest bed, the most plentiful estate, if *God* by his special finger, or *Star* of providence guides thee to it out of his secret wisdom, and *Christ* be with thee in it.

I do not wonder *Interpreters* make this *house* the *Church of God* ; It is the *Gate and Court of Heaven* now *Christ* is here ; *Angels* sing round about it, all Holiness is in it, now *Christ* is in it ; Here all the Creatures, reasonable and unreasonable, come to pay their homage to their *Creator* ; hither they come, even from the ends of the earth, to their devotions ; a *house of Prayer* it is for all people, *Gentiles* and all ; hither they come to *worship*, hither they come to pay their *Offerings* and their *Vows* ; here's the Shrine and Altar, the glorious Virgins Lap, where the *Saviour of the world* is laid to be adored and *worship'd* ; here stands the *Star* for tapers to give it light ; and here the *Wisemen* this *Day* become the *Priests*, *worship and offer*, present prayers and praises for themselves, and the whole world besides, all people of the world, high and low, learned and ignorant represented by them.

This *House* then is a place well worth the coming to ; here might the *Wisemen* well end all their Journeys, sit down, and rest where the *eternal wisdom* keeps its residence ; here may the greatest Potentates not disdain to stoop and enter, where the *King of Kings and Lord of Lords* vouchsafes to make his Lodging. Here only in this blessed *Inn*, where *Christ* is lodged, can the soul truly rest ; no Wisdom but what is here, no Greatness but what is his, no house but what is sanctified by his presence, no
bed

bed but where his *right hand* becomes our *Pillow*, and his *left* our *covering*; can *satisfie the wearied soul*, or give so much as one wink of rest, or quiet, or contentment to it. Well may the *wisemen* pass by all other houses to come to *this*; slight all the magnificent Palaces in the earth, to take up a lodging in this *Inn*; leave all other sights for this blessed *sight*, and count nothing worth the seeing till they see *him*, nothing but *him*.

Wise men will do so still, esteem *Gods House*, how mean soever it appear, above all houses; his sight above all that can be seen, *count all things dross and dung* so they may gain *Christ*, one glance of him, one beam of his glorious brightness. Any place shall be worth being in where he is; no journey tedious, that at last brings to him; no way troublesome, that leads to him; Rocks and Mountains easier than flowry plains and Meadows; Sands and Desarts pleasanter than the *Spicie Gardens of the East*, and the *Hesperian Orchards*; Ice, and Snows, and rain, and hail, and stormy weather, the greatest hardships that all these lower Regions can pour upon us, more delightful than continual Summers, and perpetual Springs, than uninterrupted sun-shines and gawdy days, if by those endurances we may at length arrive at the *feet of Christ*. All the injuries and inconveniences that can befall us here, are not worth the naming so they bring us to our *Saviour*. *O my God*, let me loose all so I may find him, let me want any thing so I want not him, let me have nothing so I may have him. He is the only thing the *Wise men* sought, and he it is that thus seeking they found, and saw at last. *And when they were come into the house, they found the young Child with Mary his Mother*.

And he was a thing worth finding. And found he would be, because they sought him; will be so of us, if we seek him diligently, carefully, and constantly as they did here: For the words here may as well carry the title of a reward for their pains, as of a posture of their faith. Some *ancient Copies* (which the *Latine* follows) read *Dei invenerunt, they found the Child*; and thus it seems to speak their success, and the recompence of their labour in the search. Others, they say, as *ancient* read *viderunt, they saw the Child*, which our *English* follows; and though there be no great difference, or matter of distinction, yet being authorized by our *Church*, we are willing to make use of, as being of a larger capacity, as well somewhat expressing the *Wise mens carriage* as their *success*. For we intend to handle both.

1. As it presents to us their *success*. A success sufficient to encourage us all to turn perpetual travellers to find *Christ in the flesh*. *Christ a Child*; to find him as soon almost as he can be found, a *young Child*, not yet full a fortnight old; to find him with his *Mother* too, *Christ* and the devout soul together, *Christ* and the soul united; to find him and *Mary* together, *Christ* exalted in our hearts, (for so *Mary* signifies exalted) his Kingdom and Power set up and exalted in our hearts; to find all this, all this for one poor journey, for the pains and labour of so small a number of days and hours, is a success than which no journey, no undertaking can have better: yet all these are here.

1. They found, first, an *incarnate God*, their *Saviour in the flesh*, a sight that the very *Angels* desire to look into, *Bow down to look into*, says *St. Peter*, 1 *Pet. i. 12*. A sight which all the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets* still desired to see, but could not: A sight which made the very *Angels* leave their hea-

ven to come down and see, and seeing, sing for joy; A sight which made the Stars rejoyce in their courses, and wait upon poor mortals steps that they might be admitted to behold it. For indeed, what wonder ever saw they like it? He that *spans the Heavens* become a span breadth himself. The *eternal word* without a word to say, the *infinite wisdom* become childishness, the *incomprehensible greatness* wrapt up in swadling-bands. He that *fills heaven and earth*, not big enough to fill a Virgins arms. He that *opens his hand* and *fills all things living* with his *plenteousness*, sucking himself a little milk out of his *Mothers Breasts* to live by; He poor himself who makes all rich: God a man! Eternity a child! who would not travel the world over to see this miracle, and think his time and pains never spent so well as then?

2. But secondly, to have the first sight almost as it were of so happy a wonder, adds something to the glory of the *success*, to be admitted among the first into *Christs* presence, to be so honour'd as to be of the number of his first attendants, to be with him whilst he is yet a *child*, to wait upon this new-born *King*, and have relation to him from his *Cradle*, to meet with him so *young*, so tender, so pliable, so easie to be approach'd and dealt with, is a *success* of so much honour and obligation, that we may expect any thing from his hands, being of his first followers and servants in so tender a condition towards us.

3. Thus far the Journey seems sufficiently successful; yet not only to find a *Saviour in the flesh*, so near allied unto us, and so soon almost as he is so made to us, but also thirdly to find him in his *Mothers* arms, fast claspt within our souls (for every faithful soul is *Christs* Mother, as well as blessed *Mary*, conceives, and brings him forth, and nourishes him, as well as she, the soul spiritually, as she naturally) to find, I say, *Christ* thus conceived and brought forth in our own souls, this Child in our own arms too, *Christ with us*, is that indeed which makes this finding worth the finding, this sight worth seeing. Should we only know *Christ after the flesh*, though amongst the first that knew him; had we no more than an outward sight, did we not see him with his Mother in a mysterious sense, in the soul and spirit, born in our souls, they also made his Mothers (as all that believe and do Gods will, he himself calls so, *St. Mark* iii. 34, 35.) unless we thus see him, our *success* will be but lame and poor, no better than those *Jews* that saw and perished.

4. Yet the *success* here is one degree beyond it, *They saw the young Child and Mary his Mother*. *Mary* signifies exalted, to see him with his *Mother Mary*, as to see his exalted Mother, the soul exalted by his presence, his Power and Kingdom exalted in it, to see this *King* in his Kingdom, to see *Christ* reigning and ruling in us, this new-born *King* triumphing in our souls, our understandings, wills, affections, and all our faculties subjected to him: and this is a good sight where e're we see it. This is then the sum of the *success* we shall find of our travel after him. (1.) The perfect sight: And (2.) the easie knowledge of him: (3.) Our union with him: (4.) Our exaltation by him. He will reveal himself to them that seek him, discover himself betimes to them that carefully search for him, unite himself and be with them that follow after him, and set up his throne and excellency in them that find him.

2. Indeed this, now secondly, is worth the seeing, worthy the beholding. They *saw* it (1.) they *saw* it and *admired* it: their seeing him, it was the *Lords* doing, and could not but be *admirable in their eyes*. They could
not

not certainly but admire and wonder to see the *Star* had pointed out the *Child*, so poor a *Child*; a King in rags: so glorious a *Child*, so blessed a *Mother* in so poor a plight. *Saw* it and *fell down* (say the next words) *fell down* in amazement and astonishment it may be, as well as any way else, to see so great a mercy, so strange a sight.

2. Yet *saw* it, secondly, and *believed*: saw by the eye of faith, as much as by the eye of sense; believed presently it was the *Child* they sought, and therefore *fell down and worshipped*; which certainly they would not have done, had they not believed. Indeed the strange guide that conducted them, the resolution for the place at least (*Bethlehem* by name) which they met with at *Jerusalem*, the new return of their lost *Starry Leader* as soon as they were got out of *Jerusalem*; the very standing and fixing of it self (which all the while before was in perpetual motion) over this very place where they found this *Child*, might sufficiently assure them that it was his *Star*, that he was the *Lord* whom this *Star* attended: so that they might not only believe out of credulity, or an impatient desire to be at their journeys end, or at home again; but out of prudence, as it became wise men, who lay all together ere they fix their Faith. *Saw and believed*, that's the second.

3. *Saw it and were glad* too; that's a third adjunct of seeing such a sight. If the seeing of the *Star* again, in the *former verse*, made them to *rejoyce with exceeding great joy*, which could only confirm their hope to find him, how *exceedingly exceeding great joy*, *gaudio valde, valde magno*, must it needs be they rejoyced with when they found him?

4. *Saw and worshipped*, that should be a fourth; but it is the third and next part of the Text, which the time and season now forbids me to look into. Only this to recapitulate the rest and apply it home.

1. *Behold we*, first, and *admire this sight*, the mercy and goodness of our *Saviour*, thus for us to become a *Child*, to take upon him the infirmities and inconveniences of our nature, even from its first weaknesses; to make himself so accessible to us, so easie to be approacht, to vouchsafe to be daily conceived again, and born in our souls and spirits; to take upon him besides the rule and guidance over us; to set up his throne in so poor a place as our unworthy souls, amidst so much frailness and unpreparedness, souls more filthy and stinking when he first comes to them, than the very Stable he was born in, amidst the dung and ordure of the Beasts. Behold, and see if there were ever goodness like this goodness, *see and admire it*.

2. *See*, secondly, and *believe it* too. The most incredulous among the *Apostles*, *St. Thomas*, when he once saw, he soon believed. See but how the *Star* moves and fixes, and even points us to him; how readily the *Wise men* entertain the sight, and *fall down and worship*: see how all the *Prophecies* concur and meet in this *young Child*, see how the world is overspread with this Faith, and has so many hundred years continued it, notwithstanding so many persecutions, and I shall not need to persuade you to play the *Wise men* too, and upon so many testimonies and evidences believe the same.

3. Yet I exhort you (3.) to *see it and be glad*. Heaven rejoyced at it; and the *Earth* was glad. *Angels* sung proper *Anthems* for it. The *Shepherds* joyfully tell it out, The *Wise men* here scarce know how to carry themselves for joy, open all their *treasures*, and fling about their *gifts* to express their gladness; only *Herod* and the *Jews*, *Herodian Jews*, *Jerusalem*

lem Jews, men addicted wholly to the pomps, and pride, and vanity of the City, are troubled at the birth of so humble a *Saviour*. It is a *Day* of rejoycing, this. 'Tis the *Lords Day*, *the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce* (says the Psalmist) *and be glad in it*. 'Tis the *Day* of shewing himself to us *Gentiles who sate in darkness, and the shadow of death*. 'Tis fit therefore we should be glad for so great a blessing. 'Tis the *Day* he was Baptized in, and that ever useth to be among us a joyful day; great joy and feasting at it. It is a *Marriage Day*, the *Day* he wrought his first *Miracle* upon, when he *turned water into wine*, on purpose to make us merry; the water of tears, into the wine of joy. So many blessings together, so many *good tidings* in one day, so many glorious things, so bright a *Star*, so glorious a *Child*, so blessed a *Mother*, so miraculous a *Baptism*, so chearful a *Miracle*, so triumphant a *Resurrection*; all together on one day, must not, cannot be found out, cannot be seen of Christians so much concerned in them all, without perpetual Songs of gladness and rejoycing.

I should leave you here, but that we must needs yet see a little, one step farther. *See and learn*: Is *Christ our Saviour* here a *Child*? see then that we *become like little children*, in humility, and innocence; we shall not see Heaven, nor him in it else (he tells us) *S. Mat. xviii. 3*. Is he so *little*? let not us then think much to be accounted so, to be made so. Is he content to lie in his *Mothers lap*? let not us grudge then if we have no where else to lie than upon our Mother earth. Is he content to partake our weaknesses? let not us then be impatient when we fall into sicknesses and infirmities. Is he a *Child to be adored and worshipped*? let us then be careful in all places, and at all times to *adore and worship him*. Will he accept our *presents*? let us *present* our *Souls* and *Bodies*, and *Estates*, and all to his service; lay all our *treasures* at his feet, *worship* him with all that is precious to us, think nothing too precious or good for him. In a word, is he to be *found*, is he so easie to have access to? Call we then upon him whilst he is near, and seek we him while he may be found, seek we him how he will be found, for always he will not, nor every way he will not.

Follow therefore the *wise mens* steps, so soon as ever the *Day-star* arises in our hearts, so soon as ever any heavenly light of holy inspiration shines into us; begin we to set forward, get we out of our own Countries, from our sins, arm our selves against all temptations, against the pleasures, the perfumes and spices of *Arabia Felix*, of prosperity and honour; against the sandy Desarts of *Arabia Deserta*, against driness, and dulness, commonly the first temptations that we meet with in our way to Christ, that make us to have little or no relish of it; against the rocky and thievish passages of *Arabia Petraea*; against the rocks of temptations, and afflictions; against the subtleties, and treacheries, and violences of the suggestion of ill companions, wherewith the Devil doth way-lay us. Get we up to *Jerusalem* the *Holy City*, enquire we there of the word of God, and at the mouth of the Priest (which God hath said *shall preserve knowledge* for others good, what-ever for his own.) Ask I say, and enquire there how we shall find out Christ; rejoyce we ever in the light of Heaven, walk by it, make much of it, of all holy motions and inspirations, continue in it; and let neither the tediousness of the way, nor the frailty of our own flesh, nor any stormy or tempestuous weather, any cross or trouble, nor any Winter coldness of our own dull bosoms, nor sometime the loss even of our guides, (those heavenly and spiritual com-

comforts which God sometimes in his secret Wisdom withdraws from us) nor any carnal reason or interest deter us from our search after this Babe of Heaven, after Christ the Saviour; but go on constantly, and cheerfully through all these difficulties to the *House of God*, to the *Church of Christ*; then shall we be sure to find him, find him *with his Mother*, our souls find him, our affections embrace him, then will he be exalted in us, and exalt us from this House, the *Church Militant* below, to that above, the *Church Triumphant* in the Heavens; this Child make us grow from grace to grace, till we come to the perfect stature of himself, here of Grace, and hereafter of Eternal Glory.



THE

THE SECOND SERMON ON THE EPIPHANY.

St. MAT. ii. 10.

When they saw the Star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.



OR, and great joy, and exceeding great joy! what's the matter? truly, no great matter one would think; only a *Star* appearing. Who is it then that are so much rejoiced at it? may we not call their wisdom into question? their joy into dispute? For the men, they were *wise men* I can tell you, *ver. 1.* Wise men from the *East*, great Wise men: and for their *rejoicing*, 'tis the wisest action they ever did, because it was the best sight they ever saw; the luckiest *Aspect* they ever beheld in *Heaven*: the happiest *Star*, that thus led them out of the region of darkness into the land of light, that thus conducted them to *Christ's* abode and presence; the greatest reason in the world to be glad at.

Ye hear much talk of a late *Star* or *Comet*, and much ado about it; but no *great joy* as I can hear. It comes they tell us upon a sad errand, is sent to us with heavy tidings: *no such* but is, that I believe; though I have no confidence of their wisdom that pretend to tell us its intent, and business. But those *They* in the Text, I know were truly wise, because the Letter tells us so; especially guided and directed into the knowledge and meaning of the *Star* they are so glad at. And the *Star* comes with the best news that ever came, is but a Ray of the *Star of Jacob*, the *Morning-Star* to usher in the *Sun of Righteousness*, or our usher to him. Other *Stars* do commonly but befool their *Students*, delude their observers, and make them sad: This makes us wise, and glad, and glad to *salvation* too. The other too often *tend* from *Christ*, cause men to forget him, take away the faith and trust that is due to him, to put it to a wandering *Planet*, its *Aspect* and *Position*. This brings us to him, brings us to *Jesus* and his holy habitation. And because it does so, we will look upon it and be glad, follow it and be exceeding glad.

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For to us still the *Star* shines, and we may see it in the Spirit, in the spiritual sense and meaning. And indeed that's the *best*, the *only* seeing. The eye of *sense* could not in these *Magi*, that saw it then in being, cannot in us, that see it now only in the notion, work the joy the *Text* expresses. There was an *inward* light, that made the *outward* then so comfortable; the meer light of a *Star*, though never so glorious, could never else have done it; cannot now if it should appear *again*. It was some internal light and revelation then concerning it made them so glad, will make *us* as glad as *they*, if we so look upon it as well as *they*. And *they* and we are but the *same*, of the *same* *stock* and *kin*, *Gentiles* both, both equally concerned in the *Star*, and in the *joy*; *they* only the *first-fruits*, we the *lump*; *they* saw it in the heavens, we see it in the word; a thing as clear and firm, every *word* of it, as the heavens, and we as much reason as *they* had to be glad.

So both the sum and division of the *Text* will be comprehended in these *two particulars*. The *ground of their joy and ours*, and the *extent of it*. The *ground* and *occasion* of their joy and ours, what *they* did then, what we are still to rejoyce in. *When they saw the Star they rejoyced*, when we see it, we must do so too.

The *extent* and *measure* of this rejoycing both theirs and ours, joy in the *positive*; great it was, if compared with other joy; above other joy in the *comparative*, and *exceeding* great joy, the greatest joy in the *superlative*, as high as may be. *They rejoyced with exceeding great joy*.

The *Star*, any *Star* or light that leads unto *Christ*, is a just occasion and ground of *joy*; and when such an one we have, when such an one we see, we cannot be too glad, we cannot exceed, though it be exceeding. This the *sum*, these the *particulars* of the *Text*. I begin with the *ground* of our joy, and theirs, that we may rejoyce the more, that our joy may be the greater, when we see how great the ground is, that *their* joy was not for nothing; nor will *ours* be, if it be for nothing but what *theirs* was.

Yet before we enter upon either, 'tis requisite we consider the *persons*, look upon *them*, before we look upon the *Star*, that we may see how this *They*, may become *we*; how we are interested either to look or rejoyce with them.

The first verse tells us who they were, *wise men from the East*: four points we may have thence, and all so many grounds of joy.

1. *Gentiles* they were. And that to *them* a door is opened unto life, Acts xiv. 27. that to them that sate in darkness and the shadow of death, light is here sprung up, is a good ground of joy: to such the light is comfortable. And to us also upon the same account; for we were *Gentiles*, nay, and darkness too, Eph. v. 8. good reason to rejoyce, that now we are not, that we are come into the light.

2. If *Gentiles*, then *sinners* too: I know not then who can be out; for if heaven notwithstanding our sin and wickedness vouchsafe so to look upon us, nor *they* nor *we*, no body sure, but must needs be glad.

3. Great men they were, foretold in the *Psalms*, under the notion of the *Kings of Arabia and Saba bringing gifts*, Psal. lxxii. 10. This is more cause of joy then you would think at first. St. Paul's, *Not many noble, not many mighty are called*, 1 Cor. i. 26. were enough to startle and amaze the rich and great men of the world; and, how hard is it for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? Our Saviours words might very well trouble us, spoil all our mirth, all our joyes, but for this, that the *Magi*, great *Princes*, and rich and honourable have an interest in *Christ's* *Star*, for all that, as well as any

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4. They were *learned* too. *Magi*, *Wise men* is the name the story gives them. And the *Apostles*, *Not many wise, not many learned*, again might well amaze us, and make us more than sad; but for this *They*, that such as they, are not yet such, but that they may come one day to see *Stars* under them, and in the mean time have their part and portion in the *Star* that leads to *Christ*. A sound cause of joy, that however the new *lights* count of *Princes*, and *great and learned men*, as enemies to him whose this *Star* was; yet this *Star* shines to them too, them before any, was lighted up for them above all the rest. *Shepherds*, and *women*, and ignorant *People* are not to be taught or led by *Stars*, they understand not their voice and language, that's for the wise and learned, to guide them. Mean and ordinary capacities must have other ways, other guides and *lanthorns* to lead them to *Christ*.

Thus from the *persons* we have four grounds of the great joy we hear, that neither *Heathen Ignorance*, nor *Heathen Learning*, nor *Honour*, nor *Greatness*; neither great temptations, nor great finfulness, no condition or quality how sad or cumberfom, but this *Star* rises for, and is ready to attend into the presence of *Christ*; all may have a portion in the *Star*, and in the *Joy*. And good reason we have to rejoyce for our selves, and our relations, that no persons or condition is debarr'd it.

Proceed we yet deeper into the grounds of this joy. Three there are, that they (we speak of) *saw*: (1.) *Saw somewhat to speak of*. (2.) *Saw the Star*. (3.) *Saw it at that time*, when they were even at a loss, had but a while before quite lost the sight, that's, *when they saw it*, the time when they saw it in.

The *first* point is, that *see* they did, and a point worth noting; that notwithstanding their great distance from *Judea*, the only Nation that then sate in light, that had the knowledge of his Laws, these yet came *seeing*: That *God* hath some particular persons all the *world* over to whom he hath given eyes to see him. No Nation indeed, no *whole* people but the *Jews* were seeing, yet *Job* in *Uz*, and *Jethro* in *Midian*, and *Rahab* in *Fericho*, and *Ruth* in *Moab*, and *Ittai* in *Gath*, and the *Queen* in *Sheba*, and the *widow* in *Sarepta*, and *Naaman* in *Syria*; some in every Nation that could see the light of Heaven and rejoyce in it.

Corporal sight then of the eye, is one of the greatest temporal comforts our life is capable of; we lose the chiefest of joy and pleasure of a mortal life, when we are deprived of that. 'Tis worth rejoycing then, worthy rejoycing in the *Lord* too, that *that* we have, that we can see, that we are not blind.

But there is a spiritual, and *immaterial* eye, and seeing with it; the eye of *Faith*, and our believing by it, that is far beyond the *bodily* sight and seeing. 'Tis that by which *we live*, *Heb. x. 38*. 'tis that only by which we truly see Heaven, or behold *Stars*, that's a great ground of joy.

Especially if we add *hope* to it, the other eye of the *Spirit*, that pierceth within the vail, that sees all the joys and pleasures of beatitude, with affection and delight, that does, as it were, bring *Heaven* home into not our eyes only, but our bosoms. The hope of Heaven, and heavens *happiness*, how glad and jocund will it make the heart; more than when the *Corn*, and *Wine*, and *Oyl* increase, a better sight by it, than all the riches and pleasures of the earth, all the profit and assistance of it, all the beauties and glory of it, can afford us.

This sight of *Hope*, and *that* of *Faith*, were they the *wise men* had. It was thus they saw the *Star*, believed it was the *Star* of the *Messias*, the only

only guide to their new-born *Saviour*, their convoy to him ; and that such an one there was, they should come to by and by ; this they saw by the eye of *faith*. Thereupon they proceed to *hope*, to see their hopes also in him ; hope ere long to be admitted to the sight and service of him : hope this *Star* will now bring even them to its *Master*, and give them a place hereafter with him among the *Stars*, that they may one day *shine in glory* like them.

Thus you see *Videntes* will easily enough be brought home to us. We, even at this day, *thus* see the *Star* by the *two eyes* of faith and hope, believe what here they saw, that such a thing there was, a *Star* lighted up on purpose to lead the *Gentiles* to *Christ* ; *hope* what here they felt within them, some spiritual ray and guidance to him ; both believe and hope that as an outward visible *Star* there was to them ; so an inward and invisible *Star* still there will be to us, by the light of which we may all come to the knowledge of *Christ*. We are next to *see it what it is* ; what it is to *them*, what it is to *us* ; how this *star* looks to *them*, how it looks to *us*.

To them this *Star* was a *material Star* : to us 'tis a *spiritual* ; and both bring their joy with them. The *Psalmist* seems to be ravish'd with joy upon the sight of the *Stars* of *Heaven*, when he considered the *Heavens* the works of *Gods fingers*, the *Moon* and the *Stars* that he had ordained, *Psal. viii. 3*. Then in a kind of *Extasie* he cries out, *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him ?* That thou thus *spanglest* the *Heavens* with *Stars* for him ? That thou thus *visitest* him by the *Stars* ? Methinks the very beholding of that golden *Canopy*, now our covering, hereafter to be our footstool ; the casting up of our eyes to *heaven* in a bright starry night, and considering that all those *glorious Lamps* are for the use of us *poor men* here, and for our *glory* too hereafter, cannot but raise a sweet delight and pleasure in the devout and pious soul, and force out an *ejaculation* of thankfulness and joy to *God* that made them for us. Sure I am, that when neither *Sun* nor *Stars* appeared, *Acts xxvii. 20*. it follows presently, that *all hope of being saved was then taken away* : O the joy of a *Star then* ! the appearing of a *Star* would have made them *then* have leapt for joy. We see them commonly, that makes us so little to regard them. If we behold them seriously, we would sing together with them, as *Job* says, *they do together* ; *Job xxxviii. 7*. and praise him together, as the *Psalmist* speaks, with those *stars of light*.

But yet if we should have a *Star* made on *purpose* for us, we would be gladder, that *God* should descend to so immediate and special a care of us, as to light up one of those bright *Candles* for some particular intent and service to us ; and such an one this is ; great reason therefore sure to rejoyce in it. So much the *more*, in that commonly the new raised *Stars* portend *mischiefs* and misfortunes to us ; but this was, as all the *Astrologers* and *wise men* then observed, a healthsom, glad som *star*, that brought health, and happiness, and saving in its wings ; never any such, or like it, before, or since. When *God* thus vouchsafes to make heaven dance attendance on us, make all the *Stars* and *Lights* speak good to us, some of them more than others ; those heavenly Creatures thus wait upon earth & dust, who is now so dull and earthy as not to rejoyce and glory in it ? Yet if the *star* not only portend happiness, but *eternal* happiness besides ; if it foretell not only earthly, but *heavenly* blessings too ; if it be a *Star* that leaves us not till it have brought us to the Child *Jesus*, till it hath brought us to *God* himself, there is matter indeed of great exceeding joy. So a fourfold ground

of joy you have in this very *Star*; First, *God's general* providence over man, to make even the heavenly Creatures serve him. Secondly, *God's special* Providence in it, now and then sending a *Star*, some special token to forewarn or guide him. Thirdly, *God's comfortable* Providence in so doing, sometimes to bless and comfort us, to uphold and cheer us. Fourthly, *God's saving* Providence, thus to make all things, though never so distant from us, signally instrumental to our eternal happiness and salvation; making the *Stars* and *Heavens* thus minister unto us. For these four we may well take up *St. Paul's* resolution, *Phil.i.18. We therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*

And yet I must give you a *fifth* ray of this *Star*, *God's* particular Providence over the *Gentiles*, strangers from the *Covenant of Promise*, *aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel*, men without promise, without hope; that had neither promise, nor hope of mercy, *Eph.ii.12.* that to *them* this *Star* should appear, for *them* be made and sent, is such a ground of joy to *us*, that are of the same stock and lineage, that without it *we* had had no joy at all, *who ever* had. 'Tis upon this title we have our share in this happy *Star*; upon this particular dispensation of thus gathering the *Gentiles* to him by it, as by a *Standard* or *Ensign* for them to flow in unto him, as the *Prophet* phrases it. This is the *fifth* ray of the material *Star*, and it may go for a *sixth*, That the *Gentiles* not then only, but even to this day *still* enjoy the benefit of that *Star*, have oftentimes material and *sensible* convoys unto *Christ*; are often by the things of sense, by *sensible* blessings, drawn and persuaded to his service. Thus you have the six Rays of the *Star*, six comfortable Rays to ground our joys upon in the material *Star*.

We come now to the *mystical* or spiritual, those *Stars* and *Lights* which yet remain, even to this day, to guide us to the same *Jesus*! For more than one there is of this sort, and all sufficient grounds of *Joy*.

1. The first sort of *Stars* are devout and *holy* men, shining, as *Daniel* represents them, *like the Stars*, *Dan.xii.3.* *Stars* they are in this world whilst they live; burning, and shining *Lights*, the very light and life, and glory of the earth, while they are upon it; and *Stars* they shall be in the heavens when they come thither. Here they go before us with the light of good examples to lead us to *Christ*, and his righteousness, to all holy and heavenly conversation; And for it they shall one day shine as *Stars* for ever and ever. A ground of joy it is to us, that *this Star* we have, that such guides we have, by whose examples to conform our selves to the obedience of *Christ*, in whose light to walk to him.

2. A second sort of *Stars* are the *Bishops* and *Pastors* of the *Church*. For, however men now reckon them, or however now much darkned in their heaven, in this *our Church*, in our *Hemisphere*, *Stars* they are in the hand of *Christ*, *Rev.i.16.* in his *right hand* too, the vision so interpreted, *v.20.* the seven *Stars*, the *seven Angels of the Churches*; the *Church* it self crown'd with *twelve such Stars*, *Rev. xii. 1.* the twelve *Apostles*. All crowned *Churches*, all that are compleat and perfect, are crowned with such *Stars*, with *Bishops*, *Pastors*, and *Teachers*. And a solid ground of joy it is, that we have such *Stars* to guide and direct us into the knowledge of *Christ*, into the ways and means of salvation. Let *Hereticks* and *Schismatics* think their pleasure, an exceeding joy it is, to all that either understand Religion, or practice it, that *God* still allows us the glory of these *Stars*, though one differing in glory from another; that he hath
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not yet totally darkened our heaven upon us, nor removed our true, lawful, and faithful *Pastors* clean away; that we wander not from Sea to Sea, and from the *North*, even to the *East*; that we run not to and fro to seek the Word of God, to see a *Star*, and cannot find it, but have them yet standing over us and directing us. It will be a thousand to one but we miss of *Christ* when we lose this *Star*; a thousand to one that we go into the wrong house instead of his when we lose our *Bishops*, and *Teachers*, the days we now see tell us so already. For his *House* being undoubtedly the *Church*, and the *Church* not to be seen or found, but by the light and brightness of *successive Bishops* and *Ministers*, who are the *Churches* glory, and its Crown and joy, nothing but sad and giddy errors can be expected where they are not.

A *third Star* is the *Word of God*, and there, first, the sure Word of Prophecy, a light, as *St. Peter* styles it, *shining in a dark place*, to which he tells us we do well if *we take heed*, 2 *Pet.* i. 19. Then secondly, the sure Promises of the Gospel of Grace, and Truth, and Pardon, the comfortable and glorious light by which we are led to the knowledge of *Christ*; full glad and merry with the hopes of such pardon and forgiveness, of such grace and favour.

A *fourth Star* is inward Grace, the light of the *holy spirit*, by which we are not only led to the place of this new-born Child, but this Child it self even new-born in us. This is a *Star* that rises in the very heart, the *Day-star rising there*, 2 *Pet.* i. 19. without which we should sit in perpetual shades, the day never dawn upon us. All the former *Stars*, good Examples, and Instructions, and spiritual Predictions, and Promises, *Pastors*, and *Teachers*, can teach little without this *Star*. *St. Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* water, and no increase; the *Preachers* speak and preach into the air, nothing stay behind; good example be spilt as water on the ground, divine Prophecies and Promises only strike the outward ear, to little purpose all of them together, unless the *spirit* speak within, and warm and lighten the soul with its *fiery* tongue, and comfort it with inward light and heat. Hence is the joy that is unspeakable, and full of glory, which the Apostle speaks of, 1 *Pet.* i. 8.

A *fifth Star*, which is *heavenly glory*, a bright morning *Star* it is, that *Christ* promises to give him, that *continues and holds out unto the end*, *Rev.* iii. 28. I will give him *the morning star*, that is, eternal life, the *Star of glory*. This is a *Star* will shew us *Christ* as he is; bring us to him, not in his Cradle, but in his Throne; not in his *Mothers* lap, but in his *Fathers* bosom: A *Star* that will lead us, both here and hereafter, to his presence. Here the great *Star* that most surely brings us, and most effectually persuades to *Christ*, and *Christian Piety*, is the hope of Heaven, the promise of Glory. In the strength of this hope we suffer any thing for him; we hunger and thirst, endure cold and nakedness, poverty and scorn, whips and fetters, halters and hatchets, racks and tortures, ignominy and death, whilst this *Star* seems to open heaven unto us: thus it brings us to him here, and hereafter it fills us with the beatifical vision of him for ever. I need not tell you this is a very sufficient ground of the greatest joy, it self being almost nothing else.

And yet there is a *sixth Star*, the *Star* that was foretold should come out of *Jacob*, *Num.* xxiv. 17. *I am the bright morning Star*, *Rev.* xxii. 16. *I Jesus*, says he himself, am the root and off-spring of *David*, and the bright and morning *Star*. He the *Star* that leads us to himself; his own beauty, the great attractive to him; his mercy the sure convoy to himself; his

his humility, his being the root, so low and humble, the conduct to his Highness; his Incarnation and Nativity, his becoming the off-spring and Son of *David*, being made man, the only way above all to bring us unto himself. Here's the ground, the very ground indeed of all our joy and comfort, that he thus came into the World to save Sinners, thus clouded his eternal brightness, his *flurry* nature, his glorious *Godhead*, with the dark rays of flesh and matter, appearing at best but as a sublunary *Star*, the *Doctor* and *Bishop* of our souls, that we might so the easier come unto him, and be comforted, not confounded, in his brightness.

Thus we have multiplied the *Star* in the *Text* by the perspective of the Spirit into Six, or shew'd you the six spiritual rays which issue from it, which reach to us, and even shine (*God* be thanked) still, though that be gone, or shut up in the Treasuries of the *Almighty*; all of these signal grounds of true Christian joy; Good *Examples*, good *Teachers*, a good *Word of God*, the good *Spirit of Grace*, the good *hope of glory*, the good of *goods*, our good and gracious *Saviour*; so good *Stars*, and so good occasion of rejoycing, that there can be no better.

3. And yet a degree may be added, from the *third* Consideration of the time *when* this *Star* appeared. Indeed it had long before *this* day been seen; had led the *wise men* all the way, comforted and cheer'd them up all their long journey through; only at *Hierusalem* there it left them, there where one would think the *Star* should shine the *brightest*. But (1.) What need *Star-light*, when the *Sun* of righteousness is so *near*? Or what (2.) should need a *Type*, when the *Substance* was so hard by? Or what necessity (3.) of a *Star*, when they were now in a surer and *brighter* light, so says *St. Peter*, 1 Pet. i. 19. the *Law* and *Prophets* at hand to point out him they sought? Or how (4.) should we expect any special favour from the *God* of Heaven, while we stay in *Herod's* Courts, in *Satan's* territories, in wicked company? Or why (5.) should we think the *Star* should stay upon us, when we leave it? That *God* should help us, when we, as it were, renounce his direction, to enquire for mens? Go to the *Jews* and *Herod* for it? How should we but lose *God's* grace, if we neglect it?

'Tis the great ground here then of their rejoycing, that after they had lost it, they here recover it; that they are now got out of *Herods* Court, a place of sin and darkness, and are now refresh'd again with the heavenly Light. No joy in the World like that of recovering Heaven, when it is almost *lost*. No joy to the womans for finding again the *Groat* that she had lost. No rejoycing like the *Shepherds* for the *lost* sheep when he has found it. The joy reacheth up to heaven, says *Christ*; the very *Angels* rejoyce at it, when a sinner is returned from the error of his way, when *God* lights anew this *Star* to him. Truly, when we have lost any of the afore-mentioned *Stars*, and afterwards recover them, whether they be the *Examples* of the *Saints*, that have unluckily slipt out of our memories; or our *Bishops* and *Pastors*, that have been *forced* or driven from us; or the *truth* of the holy *word*, which false *glosses* and corrupt interpretations have hidden from us; or the inward comforts of the *Spirit*, which our sins have for some time robb'd us of; or the true relish of heavenly joy, and eternal happiness, which hath a while been lost by reason of our delighting our selves wholly in sensual pleasures or employments; or lastly, the beauty of this *holy Child*, which has been somewhat clouded from us, through our weakness and infirmity in apprehending it, which soever of them it is that we have first lost, and then recovered,

recovered; when we either recover our memories, or our Ministers, or the truth, or the holy Spirit, or the sight of heaven, or the beauty of *Christ* into us; the joy is far greater than it was at the beginning, *Carendo magis quam fruendo intelligimus*, because we never thoroughly understand the comfort and benefit of any of them, till we see the distress we are in with out them.

And (2.) their seeing the *Star* again when they were, as it were, in most distress, and when they were more like to be at a greater loss than ever amongst the Cottages of *Bethlehem*, like utterly to be confounded by the horror of poverty, and the sight of nothing but unkingly furnitures; this it was that so rais'd their joy. And it will do ours at any time, to have help and succour come timely to us, to be delivered and rais'd in the midst of distresses and despair. 'Tis the very nick of time to enhance a joy.

'Tis not less neither (3.) to creatures compounded of flesh and blood, to have even some *sensible* comforts renew'd to stir us up. To see a *star*, to behold comfort with our eyes, to have the inward comfort augmented by the outward, to be led to *Christ* by a *Star*, by *prosperities* and blessings, rather than a *cloud*, by *crosses* and distresses, this is more welcome, more gladfom, to the heart; and so it seems to the *wise men* themselves, that *God*, though he had given them inward guidances, and back'd them with Prophetical instructions out of his own *Word* and *Prophets*, had not yet deserted them of his outward assistance, but even added that also to all the former. Now then thus to have star upon star, material and mystical; time after time, when we most desire it, when we greatliest need it, to want no guide, no opportunity, no occasion at all to advance our happiness and salvation, how can we but, with them in the Text, rejoice now, and that with *exceeding great joy*? *Three* degrees you see are apparent in the words, all to be spent upon the *Star* that leads to *Christ*. We can never be too glad of him, or of his *Star*; any conduct or occasion to come to him: *joy*, and *great joy*, and *exceeding great joy* is but sufficient.

Nor is any joy but *spiritual*, that which is for *Christ*, really capable of those degrees; that only is truly called joy; the joy in *Christ* only dilates the heart, all other joys straiten and distress it, fill it up with dirt and rubbish; worldly joyes can never fill it otherwise: 'Tis only then enlarged when it opens up to *heaven*, earthly comforts do but fetter and compress it.

That joy (2.) is only *great*. Earthly ones are petty and inconsiderable, for petty things: *Heaven* only hath great things in it; *Christ* the only *great* one.

That only (3.) is *exceeding*. That's the joy that *passes* understanding, that exceeds all other, that exceeds all measure, that exceeds all power, none can take it from us; that exceeds all words and expression too, no tongue whatever can express it. So you see our joy, that a spiritual joy it is, because so great, so exceeding.

Yet being so exceeding, it will exceed also the narrow compass of the inward man, will issue out also into the outward; into the tongue and heads; Joy is the dilatation, the opening of the heart, and sending out the Spirits into all the parts. And if this joy we have, it will open our hearts to praise him, open our hearts to *Heaven* to receive its influence, open our hearts to our *needy brother*, to compassionate and relieve him; it will send out life, and heat, and spirit into all our powers; into our
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lips to *sing* unto him, into our fingers to *play* to him; into our feet even to *leap* for joy; into our eyes perpetually to *gaze* upon him, into our hands to *open* them for his sake plentifully to the poor; into the whole body to *devote* it wholly to his service. This is the *wise mens* joy, great and exceeding. Give me leave to fit it to the parts, to apply the joy to the several grounds, *Gaudium* to *videntes*, *magnum* to *stellam*, *valde* to the *autem* of the Text. They *saw*, and so rejoiced with joy. They saw the *Star*, and so rejoiced with great joy when they saw it; saw it so *opportunately*, they rejoiced with *exceeding* joy.

Let us then (1.) rejoice with them, with a single joy for both the *seers*, and their *seeing*; make it our joy, that neither our ignorances, nor our sins can keep us always from *Christ's* presence; that our riches and honours, our learning and wisdom may rather help than hinder us in the search of *Jesus Christ*. And rejoice we then again that *God* hath given us eyes and sight to see the ways and means of salvation. This will at least deserve our joy in the *positive* degree.

But the *Star*, or *Stars*, we mentioned, will add this *magnum* to it. Let us then (2.) rejoice greatly, or with great joy, that *God* thus vouchsafes to lead us to his Son both by outward and inward means; That he hath given us so many lights of good *examples* to walk by; That he hath lighted up his *Stars*, *Pastors*, and *Teachers* in the *Church* to direct and guide us. That he continues to us the light and brightness of his *truth*; That he enlightens us daily inwardly by his *grace*; That he fills our hearts with *hopes* of *glory*; That he is ready more and more to shew us *Christ* in all his beauty, to give him to us with all his benefits, to bring us to him in all his glory. Great joy is but little enough certainly for such great things as these.

And (3.) *exceeding* it must and will be, if we but consider the time when such great things are done, or doing for us. 'Tis when we had, in a manner, diverted from him, gone aside out of our way, left his *Star* for *Herod*. For *God* then to renew his mercy to us, to shine upon us in his former beauty, to point us even to the very house, and place to find *Christ* in; to do it then when we had wilfully departed from his conduct, is so exceeding a grace and favour, that no joy of ours be it never so exceeding, can exceed it.

And if the *wise men*, for the direction of that *single Star*, were so extremely affected with joy and gladness, how infinitely should we be for so many? Alas, they saw nothing then in comparison of us. The Child was then but in rags and swadling cloaths: he is now in robes of glory. He was then lying in an earthly *Cottage*, he is now sitting in an heavenly *Palace*. All the ways of Salvation were then but mysteries, they are now revealed. Salvation then was but in its *Clouds*, 'tis now in its *perfection*. They saw *Christ* but once, we daily see him: See him and all his *Stars*, see him amidst his *Stars*, walking with some of them in his hands; the *Stars* or *Angels* of the *Churches*, amongst other of them his *Saints*, with them in glory, creating *stars* daily in our hearts, shining to us every day in his Word and Sacraments, there opening his glory unto us, and us a door into it, and all the while the material stars even under his feet.

Seeing all these so much above what they here saw, our joy should be much above what they rejoiced with. But theirs being exceeding, ours can be no more, when we have said all we can. And that it may be so, I shall only tell you, It must exceed the joy we take in *earthly* things, we must more rejoice in *Christ*, and in his *Star*, than all the World besides;
more

more in the holiness of a *Saint*, than in the highness of a *Prince*; more in a faithful *Pastor*, than in any *Worldly Counsellor*; more in the Word of *God*, than in all the Writings of men; much more in the History of *Christ*, than in all the *Romances* and Histories of the earth; more in the Promises of the *Gospel*, than in the promises of all earthly *pleasures*, and felicities; more in the *inward* work of grace, and the inward comforts of the *spirit*, than any *sensual* satisfactions and contentments; more in the meditation of *Heaven*, and heavenly Glory, than in all the glories of the *world*; more in *Christ*, than in all things, or hopes together; It must exceed them all.

And when it so exceeds, it will bring us to an exceeding high condition, make us exceed in grace, exceed in glory; do great and wonderful things by the power of grace to express our thankfulness, and bring us by it to the reward of exceeding glory, where we shall need no more *Stars* to guide us, nor Sun or Moon to give us light; but this *eternal* light, now pointed at by the *Star*, shall give us light both day and night, shall fill us with joy, such as neither heart can imagine, nor tongue express; that exceeds all we can speak or think; give us joy for joy, great for great, exceeding for exceeding, in his blessed Light and Presence for evermore.

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THE

THE THIRD SERMON ON THE EPIPHANY.

St. MATTH. ii. 11.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary his Mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrhe.



OUR last years business from the Text, was to see what the *wise men* saw: *Philips* counsel to *Nathaniel*, *S. John* 1. to come and see. This years shall be to do what the *wise men* did, what all *Wise-men* will do still; *Holy Davids* invitation, to fall down and worship. For having found this blessed Child, the end of all our Journeys, the crown of all our labours, the sum of all our desires and wishes: this *infant-God*, this young *King* of Heaven and Earth: what can we less then do our obeysance, and pay our Homage? All *wise men* will do so, adore the rising *Sun*, make sure of somewhat, or in the *Psalmists* phrase, *Rejoyce with reverence, and kiss this Son, lest he be angry, and so we perish*; fall down before him, and even kiss his feet in an humble adoration, that he may lift us up, and advance us in his Kingdom, at least remember us when he comes into it.

To come into the house else where *Jesus* is, and there to see him, to stand and look upon him only, and no more, is a journey and fight to little purpose. The *Oxe* and the *Ass* saw him; and many no doubt to as little purpose, upon the *Shepherds* report, and the rumour of these *wise mens* coming from the *East*, came to see and gaze upon him. It is this *worshipping* that sanctifies, prospers all our journeys; we begin them but untowardly, and finish them but unluckily without it. If we fall not down upon our knees before we go out, and bow not our selves, and worship not in thankfulness when we come in, we cannot assure our selves of any great good, either of our goings out, or of our comings in, how successful soever they seem at first, even to have obtained their ends, even
found

found *Jesus* too. This same *worshipping* is both the *end* and *blessing* of all our journeys, if they be blest; nor see we, or understand we any thing thoroughly or comfortably where that is wanting, where the worship and service of *God* and our *Saviour* is not both the aim and endeavour of all our motions.

Wise men *they* were here, that now for these *twelve* days have made it *theirs*; And the *Ethiopian Eunuch*, Acts viii. 27. a great Counsellour, made it the only business of his Journey to *Jerusalem*, to worship *only*, and so return. And in the devouter times of *Christianity*, the devout Christians, when their haste was such they could not stay out a *Prayer* or *Collect*, would yet never pass a *Church*, but they would in and bow themselves, and *worship*, and be gone. *Tanti est adorare*; so weighty a business it is to worship, though but in *transitu*, to prosper any thing we are about.

It was so thought *then*: it would be so now, did we not more study to make enquiries about *Christ*, than to serve him; to dispute about *Christianity*, than to practise it: *Christianity* here begins with it. These first Christians *I may call them*, thus profess their service to their *Saviour*, thus addict themselves to the faith and obedience of *Christ*; and were there no other reason in the world to perswade it, it were certainly enough, that the first Faith in *Christ* was after this fashion, thus acknowledged and performed.

Three acts there are of it in the *Text*, *πρόσκυτοι, προσκύνουσιν, προσέτινυσαν*, falling down, worshipping, and offering. The *first*, the worship of the *Body*; the *second* of the *Soul*; the *third* of our *goods*: With these three, our Bodies, our Souls, our Goods, we are to worship him; with all these his worship is to be performed, without them *all* it is but a lame and maimed Sacrifice, neither fit for *wise men* to give, nor *Christ* to receive.

Two points of the *Text* we are gone through: the *Wise mens Journey* and *success*; their *coming* and their *seeing*; their *labour* and their *reward*. Three now we have to go through, *Proscidentes, Adorârunt, & Obtulerunt*; the three acts, or parts, or points of Worship we are to perform to *Christ*: each in its order as it lies, and first of *Proscidentes*, their *Prostration*.

Here it is we first hear of any worship done to *Christ*, and this falling down, this prostration; the *first* worship, as if no other, no lesser adoration could serve turn after so great a blessing as the sight of a *Saviour*: as if his taking on a body, challeng'd our whole bodies now; his coming down from Heaven, our falling down upon the earth; his so great humiliation, our greatest expression of our humility.

Many sorts of adoration have been observed, greater and lesser, *Bowing the head*, Exod. i. 10. *Bowing the body*, Gen. xviii. 2. *Bending the knee*, Isa. xlv. 23. *worshipping upon the knee*, Psal. xcv. 6. *God* thus worshipped by them *all*. And falling down before him is no news to hear of, neither in *Scripture* or *Antiquity*; whatsoever niceness, or laziness, or profaneness of late have either said or practis'd against it.

They were *wise men* here that did it; yet it is well that the *Scripture* calls them so. I know who have been counted *fools*, superstitious fools, for as little a matter, for the *same*: though I cannot but wonder to see as much done in a complement to a thing worse than a reasonable man, whilst *God* himself is denied it. Indeed it may be if we compare the persons, we shall quickly see the reason: These in the *Text* were *Wise men*, of credit and reputation, men of some quality, men that understood themselves, and knew the language of Heaven; and can turn the *Stars* to their proper uses, that think not much of much pains, to find a *Redeemer*,

that know how to use a *King*, and serve a *God*; that run readily at the first call of Heaven to pay this worship: *Your selves* can inform you what they are that deny it, I shall not tell you.

Poor ignorant *Shepherds* may perhaps through ignorance or astonishment omit the Ceremony and be pardon'd, so they go away praising and rejoicing; but great learned *Clerks* cannot be excus'd if they pretermitt it: but neither the one nor the other, if they deny it. Ignorance will be no sufficient plea for the one, nor a distinction or a pretence of scandal for the other, in a point so plain, as perpetual custom from the beginning of the world, and plain words of *Scripture* make it.

Abraham falls upon his face in a thankful acceptance of *Gods* promise, *Gen. xvii. 17.* His servant *Eleazar bows down and worships*, *Gen. xxiv. 26.* Old *Jacob* did as much as he could towards it *on his bed*, *Gen. xxi. 31.* And the people of *Israel*, *Exod. iv. 31.* and this before the *Law* was given. And *Moses* before the *Law* was written, fell down before the Lord, as he tells the people, *Deut. ix. 18.* So it was no *Jewish* Law or custom then, but even a point of the *Law of Nature*, though practis'd also by the *Jew*, by *David*, *Pf. v. 7.* by *Solomon*, *2 Chron. vi. 13.* by *Ezekiel*, *ch. xi. 13.* by *Daniel*, *ch. vi. 10.* by all the Prophets, by all the people; all the children of *Israel* together bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped and praised the Lord, *2 Chron. vii. 3.* *Christ* himself allows the people to do as much to him; takes it, and takes it kindly from them. *Jairus* the Ruler of the Synagogue falls at his feet, *St. Mark v. 20.* *Mary* does as much, *St. John xi. 31.* Others often do the same, and none forbidden it: nay, he himself does it to his Father, *St. Mark xiv. 35.* fell down and prayed; and do we, then think much to do it? The very *Saints* in Heaven, where there is nor shadow certainly nor Ceremony, fall down before him, even before the *Lamb. Rev. v. 8.* and *xi. 16.* and *xiv. 4.* and are we too good to do it? Is the practice of all ages, of Heaven, of Earth, and *Christ* too, not strong enough to bow our stubborn necks? Is there *Judaism* and Superstition in Heaven, in *Christ* too? Oh then let me be superstitious, I am content to be so, to be called so by any generation upon earth.

But to make it yet more evident, if it can be: nature it self in the midst of its corruptions keeps yet this impression undefac'd, and more plainly professes this Reverence due to the Deity, than even the Deity it self. Never did any the most blind and foolish Heathen yet acknowledge a *God*, but presently they worshipped him with their bodies. Nay never did any ever pretend either honour or respect to man, but he express it some way by his body, by some gesture or other of it. And must *God* that made it, and *Christ* that redeemed it, only go without it? must man be reverenc'd with the body, and the *Devil* serv'd with it, and *God* be put off with the worship of the soul, which yet neither can express it self, nor think, nor do any thing without the body whilst it is in it? It was thought a good argument by *S. Paul*, to glorifie *God* in our body as well as in our spirits (and in old Manuscripts I must tell you, *ἐν τῷ σώματι* is not found, *ἐν τῷ σώματι*, the body only, is) because they are *God's*, he hath bought them with a price, *1 Cor. vi. 20.* good reason then that he should have them. The body is for the Lord, ver. 13. of that Chapter; Who then should have it but he? 'tis for no body else: he only can claim it, others do but borrow it, or usurp it: let him therefore have it, 'tis his own, and it cannot be bestowed better: he knows best to use it, how to keep it, fear we not: Indeed it is so unreasonable to deny it him, so unprofitable to the very body

body to keep it from him, that I know not why we should expect to have it either safe or well, when we deny it him. Who can keep it better? who can easier lift it up when it is down, raise it up when it is fallen, preserve it in health and strength than *he*? And are we such fond fools then, not to present it always to his protection, and lay it at his feet, who if he tread upon it, does yet do it good?

Though we were *Hereticks* of the highest impudence, and denied his *God-head*, yet confessing his *humanity*, we can do no less than give the worship of our bodies to him; We can give him nothing less. I may without breach of charity, I fear, suspect that this generation that are so violent against the worship of the body, will e're long neither confess his *God-head* nor his *Man-hood*, turn *Arian* and *Manichee* both together, and prove a kind of mixed *Hereticks* unheard of hitherto, beyond all the wickedness and folly of all their former predecessors, come so far at last, to think all done in a fancy, or a dream, make all the work of our redemption come to nothing. For certainly, did they either seriously think him true *God* or true *man*, we should see it by their bodies, especially seeing we cannot see any thing by their spirits to the contrary. Even men us'd to be *thus* worshipped, 1 *Kings* i. 31. and *Prophets*, 2 *Kings* ii. 15. So that did they confess him *any thing*, they would certainly fall down and worship him, not *deny* it to be sure, whether do it or no.

For all falling down is not *adoration*. It is the mind that makes *that*; the intention of the soul, that turns this outward expression of the body into adoration, that makes it either *λατρεία* or *δουλεία*, either a religious or a civil worship, as it pleases.

This is the reason together with the Authority of the *Fathers*, St. *Augustin*, St. *Leo*, St. *Bernard*, and others, that I make *adorârunt* here, this word worship, to relate to the soul, as *procidentes*, falling down, to the body. Though I am not ignorant that both in the *School*, and *Grammar* sense it is seldom or never found without the interest and posture of the body, yet must it of necessity most refer to the soul, *that* being able only to specify the worship, and give it both its nature and its name, by either intending it religiously as to *God*, or civilly only as to a creature, where it gives it; the outward posture being oft the same indifferently to *God* and man.

That these *wise men* intended it as an act of *Devotion* and Religion, as to an incarnate *God*, not a meer carnal man, is the general opinion of the *Church*, and not without good ground. For first, *wise men*, who ever propound some end to all their motions, would not have undertaken so long, and tedious, and troublesom a journey to have seen a child in a Cradle, or in the mothers lap; no not a Royal babe: they were *Kings* themselves; so the *Antients* delivered them to us: and the 72 Psalm foretells them by that name; and they had often seen such sights, in as much pomp and glory as they could expect it in *Judaea*. At least *cui bono*? what good should they get by it? (*that's a thing wise men consider*) by any *King* of *Judaea*? what was such an one or his child to them, who had nor dependance nor commerce with him; or if they had, needed not make such a needless journey themselves, to no more purpose than in a *complement* to visit him?

But (2.) They tell us they had seen his *Star*; now we and they knew well enough that the *Kings* of the earth, though they have the *Spangles* of the Earth, have not the *Spangles* of the Heaven at their command; though they have Courts and Courtiers beset with sparks of *Diamonds* and *Rubies*, they have not yet one spark of Heaven in their attendance.

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No King of *Stars*, but the King of *Heaven*; none under whose command or dominion they move or shine, none that can call them *his*, but *God* that made them; to worship one then who not only can alone call all the *Stars* by their names, but by his own too, is certainly, in any *wise mans* language, to worship *God*. Our very *Star-gazers*, who confess no *King*, and for ought we can see, worship no *God*, will yet confess, that in the *Latin* they have *regit Astra Deus*, that the *Stars* are only *Gods*; and though a *Wise man* may by his wisdom divert their influence, he can in no wise either command or direct their motion.

3. They tell us too they came to worship, their whole business was nothing else; and we would think they had little indeed, if they came so far only to give a complement to a child that could neither answer them nor understand them; We must certainly take them not for *wise men*, but very *fools* to do so. And if worship be the end of their coming, we may quickly understand by the phrase of *Scripture*, that it is *divine* worship that is meant. Of worship indeed and adoration we may read in other senses there, but it is never made a business, said to be any ones aim or purpose, but when it is referr'd to *God* and his *House*. The *Eunuch* is said to come to *Jerusalem*, and worship, *Acts* viii. 27. *David* invites us to *fall down and worship*, *Psal.* xcv. 6. *St. Paul* comes to *Jerusalem* to worship, *Acts* xxiv. 11. and certain *Greeks* are said to come up to worship, *St. John* xii. 20. but all this while it is to worship *God*, never made a work to worship man. To fall down before, or bow, or reverence to any man, how great soever, is but an occasional piece of business, on set purpose never. When we come before *Kings* and *Princes* we do it, but never come before them to this end only for to do it.

4. Had they conceived no other of him than as *man*, or a Child of man, that poor contemptible condition, and unworshipful pickle they found him in, the *rags* of poverty, the *place* they saw him in, would have made them have forborn their worship quite, they would have been so far from *proidentes adorarent*, that it would have been *dedignantes abièrent*; instead of falling down and worshipping, they would have gone their ways, disdainning at him. But so powerful was his *Star*, and so had the *day-Star* risen in their hearts, so had the eternal light shined to them, that they could see what others could not; *in carne Deum*, *God* in the Child: He that led them without, taught them within, both *whom* they worshipped, and *how* to worship.

And indeed, he that knows and considers *whom* he worships, will worship both in *spirit*, and in *truth*, with his *soul* and with his *body*, in *truth* else he does not worship. *Adorare*, adoration consists of both, nay, cannot be well conceived, if you take away either the one or the other. The word it self in its *primitive* signification is, *manum ad os admoveve*, concerns the body, and is no more than to kiss the hand, and *μεγαλυνειν* of *κω* is just the same. So was the fashion of the *Greeks* to worship, and it seems ancient through the *East*; for it is an expression of holy *Job*, chap. xxxi. 21. If I have beheld the *Sun* when it shined, &c. or, my mouth hath kissed my hand, that is, if he had worshipped any other *God*. But it falls out with this as with other words, they enlarge their signification by time and custom; and so adoration is come to be applied to all worship of the body, bowing the head, bending the knee, falling on the face, kneeling at the feet, according as each particular *Country* perform their reverence. Time yet hath enlarged it further, and our *Saviour*, that eternal word, and therefore the best *Expositor* of any word, hath applied it also to the soul,

soul *πνεῦμα ἡμῶν ἐστὶν πνεῦμα*, St. *Joh* iv. 23. nay more, calls them the truest worshippers that worship in *Spirit*.

And indeed the *Spirits*, the *Souls* part is the chiefest, the worship of the body is but the *body* of worship. The soul that is it that enlivens it, the spirit and soul of it that completes it, the *inward* intention, direction, submission, and reverence is that which makes all to be accepted. To fall down in humility with the body, and lift up the soul with pride; to give an outward respect to him, and *inwardly* neglect him; to do the worship cursorily, or in a complement, without *attention* or good meaning, is to use *Christ* as the Souldiers did, worship him in a mockery, cry, *Hail King*, and *smite him*; to give a Crown of Thorns, and a Scepter of a reed: to make a puppet, or a may-game of him, or with *Herod* pretend to worship, and mean nothing less: seem devout, forsooth, in all haste, but nourish profane and murtherous, that is, sinful, careless, or *Atheistical* thoughts against him.

They do best joyn'd: God hath joyned them, and one word hath joyned them; and when joyned, we best understand them; and soul and body being so nearly joyn'd, why should we go about to *separate* them? The Prophecies foretel them both, as to be solemnly performed to him: *All Kings shall fall down before him, all Nations shall do him service*, *Psal.* lxxii. 11. and *ver.* 15. *Prayer shall be made ever unto him, and daily shall be be praised*. The Gospel, that assures it was done: and the *Apostle* tells us, that God had so ordained it should be, given him a name, which is above every Name, that at the Name of *Jesus* every knee should bow, of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth, *Phil.* ii. 9, 10. If all things in heaven and earth do do it, then spirits and bodies too. For bodies are things, and spirits are things; and in heaven and under the earth, there be no bodies, in earth there is both: so there sure to be done by both. And this name had not been long given before these wise men come to do it reverence; before it was given they came not, presently after they come; not before, that they might know how to call him they were to worship: yet presently after, that we might know it was in his name only that the Gentiles were to trust, at which to bow and worship. To worship him, to worship his Name, or at his Name, is but the same in *Scripture*, or little difference. Yet if we owe him worship, we owe also a respect unto his Name; we are not to take it vainly, or count it light, but pay a reverence to it, as to his; for therein also we worship him. As we worship his Humanity, as it is united to his Divinity, so his Name too we may well worship, that is, reverently esteem and speak of it, and so express it; spiritually rejoyce too at the hearing of it, without fear of *Superstition* or *Idolatry*. We else but poorly and lamely worship him, God knows, if we give no respect at all to his Name, or any thing that belongs to him. We may as well be afraid to worship him at all, now since he hath taken on a body, lest we should commit *Idolatry* to it, being a creature, as to fear *Superstition* in worshipping at his Name before his foot-stool, as the *Scripture* sometimes speaks; when the adoration on both hands is only directed to, and terminated in his *Godhead*.

If any then, as alas too many be so little *Christians*, as to give to *Jesus*, or his holy Name, or his holy Altars and Sacraments, no more reverence than does a *Turk* or *Pagan*, let not us for *Christ's* sake bear them company: we have better examples here before us; nay, we have *Angels* too before us at the work. When he brought his first-begotten into the world, he said, *And let all the Angels of God worship him*, *Heb.* i. 6. and certainly they do it, they fulfil

fulfil his command, and do his pleasure. And are we then too holy to do it? Is it a command upon them, whom the benefit does no way so much concern; and is it left at our pleasure, who have the most reason in the world to do it, to whom chiefly this *Christ* was born and given? may we choose whether we will worship him or no? and yet be the greatest gainers by it, and the more holy by not doing it?

Faith's the business they tell us, no matter for any thing besides: only believe and all is done. Well, but is Faith the business? and is it not a strong belief indeed, this, that can bring men out of their own Country, and that a far one too, through *Arabian* Deserts in the depth of Winter only to worship? and is it not as high a piece of Faith, notwithstanding that poor, outward, contemptible, appearance of *Christ*, yet to fall down and worship him, and believe him to be their God and Saviour, and to trust the guidance of a Star, or the word of an obscure Prophecy, or an inward motion from Heaven, before their own eyes, and all sense, and reason? To leave his Country, and to believe against hope and reason, was counted to *Abraham* for Faith, *Heb. xi.* was so to these *wise men* of the Text, will be to all that follow their example. Our Worship is but the expression of a Faith, *fides facta*, or *fides faciens*, Faith done. We worship, therefore we believe, or, we believe, and therefore worship.

And therefore, *thirdly*, offer too. Open our treasures, the treasures of our Faith, and present our gifts: *And when they had opened their Treasures, &c.*

The ancient *Fathers* have here observed both *Letter* and *Mystery*; and I am no wiser, I shall do so too. The Letter is plain enough to tell us, that God looks to be worshipped with our *Goods* as well as with our *Bodies*, and our *Souls*; and that those whom he leads by his *Star* or *Spirit*, any that will come to *Christ*, must no more come empty handed, than those that come to God, *Exod. xiii.* For God he is, and God he gave us them; God therefore, every person in the God-head, to be served with them: the first-fruits it should be in all reason, and in justice, all it might be; but some part or offering out of them howsoever. I shall open the *wise mens* treasures, and shew you them, the out-side of them, the *Letter* first.

Treasures they are called before they are opened, that we may learn God is not only to be served with mean things and ordinary ware. Nothing can be too good for him; the treasures of our *Hearts*, and the treasures of our *Cabinets* and *Coffers* are never better opened than for him. *David* would not offer what cost him nought, and *Araunah* when he does but understand God's business toward, gives like a King, 2 Sam. xxiv. 23. The *Israelites*, hard hearted *Israelites*, are yet so tender of God's Service, that they pluck off their Jewels and golden Ear-rings for the Service of the *Tabernacle*. The first Christian *Emperours* give their stately *Halls* to make *Churches*, and nothing is thought too costly by pious souls for God's worship. Are the treasures and precious things of the earth for men only, and not for God? that were strange indeed, and a bondage and usurpation the creature indeed might well groan under.

Gifts they are stiled when they are presented (2.) to tell us that God expects gifts as well as dues. Falling down and worshipping are due upon command: the second *Commandment*, that forbids it to an *Idol*, must necessarily thence infer it due to God; and if we do no more than pay our dues, what thank have we? God loves a *free-will* offering, and expects it too; unless we can suppose the *Jew* more bound to him than are we: our selves know how we value a voluntary service above any; and think we that

that God less accepts it? he accepts of the will when there is *nothing* else; so much he esteems it; and will he not accept it when he sees it pour out it self with fulness upon him?

3. *Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrhe* they prove when they are opened; such best presents as the Country affords, and the best of them: that we may know there is no Country so barren, no man so poor, but may afford *something* to Gods service. Nor the Rocks of the one *Arabia*, nor the Sands of the other so dry and fruitless, but that they yield some fruit for *Christ*. They have but little indeed, that have not to offer a *Turtle*, or a *Pigeon*; if they have no *Gold*, they may have *Frankincense* and *Myrrhe*, no such great cost: Even the poor Widow hath a Mite or two, something at least to bestow on *God*, to present him with, that none may plead excuse.

Yet (4.) as they are such as the Country yields, proportionable to *that*; so they are, as it falls out, very proportionable for *them* that offer them. *Gold and perfumes*, fit presents for *Kings* and *Princes*, and persons of Estate and Honour, to *present*, or be *presented* with; they are things either costly or delicate: and such is fittest for them to present to *Christ*, to offer up their golden Crowns, and readily part with all their sweetneses and delicacies for his honour and service. *Great men must not give mean presents*; it is unworthy of them.

Not mean ones said I? (5.) Not *few* neither: here's three together for one present at a clap; and three is all: 'Tis the perfectest number, and intimates all. Of every thing we are to give *God* somewhat; 'tis as it were a grace to sanctifie the rest: Nor can we methinks promise our selves a blessing upon any thing we enjoy, till we have first offered it, or of it, to *God*. Certain it is, I dare assure him, he loses nothing of any thing, that gives any of it to *God*, but encreaseth best by that diminishing.

6. Yet proportionable only to our *condition* are we required to offer: every one cannot offer *Gold*. These *Wise men* therefore, the *Type* of all the *Gentiles* that were to come in to offer, not only offer like *Kings*, but like persons of *meaner* condition also; *Frankincense* and *Myrrhe*, things of a lower value, that we may know, *God* accepts all, any thing, so we offer it *willingly*. *Turtles* and *Pigeons*, as well as *Lambs* and *Bulls*; *Mites* as well as *Talents*; *Frankincense* and *Myrrhe* as well as *Gold*; the poor mans present as well as the greatest *Kings* and *Princes*.

7. *God* as he loves men should keep proportion to their *abilities*, not that they should be burthened; yet he loves also that they should keep some proportion to *himself*. We must have regard to *God's* honour, as well as our own low estate; not offer *lame*, or maim'd, or refuse things. To *Christ* here *Gold* comes very fitly to relieve his necessity, his poor Mothers *Poverty*: *Frankincense* does well to perfume the *Stable*, and *Myrrhe* comes seasonable to strengthen and confirm his *infant* limbs. He gives twice, that gives in season. No gift so welcome as that which comes in the time of necessity, when we have most need. Cast we about hence, ever to proportion our presents to *God's* convenience, and the *Churches*; to supply it in want with our *Gold* and *Silver*; in contempt, and under the ill scent of scorn and ill report, to defend it with the sweet incense of Good Works; in weakness and declining, to uphold it with the myrrhe of our *Patience* and *Courage*.

8. Do we it *lastly*, *largely*, with open hearts, and hands, and purses; open *all* our treasures, spread them all before him, bid him please himself, take what he will, *all* if he will, reserve nothing, detain nothing, no part nor portion from him, as did *Ananias* and *Saphira*, who paid dearly

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indeed for being so close handed, *Acts v.* but open we all our treasures to him, keep we nothing from him; knowing this, that he that *giveth plentifully, shall reap plentifully*, and he that *gives most, shall yet never lack*. And where he takes it not himself, let us our selves *pick the choicest* out of all; and with these wise and happy souls present them to him. Somewhat out of our *Gold*, our abundance and *superfluities*; somewhat out of our *Frankincense*, our *competencies* and *conveniencies*; somewhat out of our *Myrrhe*, our *necessaries* that are to uphold nature: And as *Myrrhe* does the dead body, keep it from stinking. Somewhat out of all I say, the *more* the better; but *some* at least, some of all three. Our goods indeed, as says the Psalmist, *are nothing unto thee, O God*, nothing unto thee, in comparison of thee, the *chiefest good*: our riches nothing to thine; thou needest them not neither; yet for all that, give him them we must: for he needs not our *prayers* neither, our *souls* neither; nothing of *ours* indeed at all: Yet does he lay his claim to *all*, and require *some* of all. You will understand better what he requires, if we open the treasures a little further, go on to the *Mystery*; what *Antiquity* hath conceived infolded in the treasury of the *Text*; what is the *mystery* of this three-fold present, *Gold*, *Frankincense*, and *Myrrhe*.

For why *these* rather than any *other*? or why so specified, being no such rarities in *Judea*? somewhat certainly there is in it; a double *mystery*, say the *Fathers*: an *allegory* and a *moral*; an *allegorical*, and a *moral* sense. The *Allegory* is to teach us what to think or believe of *Christ*. In offering *Gold* they acknowledged him for a *King*, and so paid him *Tribute*. In offering *Frankincense*, or *Incense*, they confessed him to be a *God*. It is to the *gods* only that even the *Heathen* offer *Incense*. Yet (3.) In offering *Myrrhe*, they yet profess he should *die* like men: *Myrrhe* hath little other use than in *Sepultures* and *Embalming*s. So the sum of the *wise mens* Faith, or the *Magi's* Creed is thus profest, that this Child they thus adored was the *King*, *Messiah*, *God* and *Man* who should die for them.

I shall take leave to expatiate and enlarge their Creed out of the same *oblations* yet a little further, seeing the *Fathers* have led the way, and point them out, how they thus doing seem to believe all that is to be believed of *Christ*. First, his *two* natures, his *God-head* by the *Incense*, his *Manhood* by the *Myrrhe*. (2.) His *Offices*, his *Kingly* Office by the *Gold*, the very matter of the *Crown* that makes him *King*. His *Priestly* Office by *Incense*, the *Priests* Office being to offer *Incense*, *S. Luke i. 9. Levit. xvi. 13.* His *Prophetical* Office by the *Myrrhe*, representing the bitter and *mortified* life of a *Prophet*. (3.) Here's his *Birth*, his *Life*, his *Death*, and *Resurrection* all acknowledged. His *Birth* fitly resembled unto *gold*, the purest metal; his birth the purest without any sin at all, of a *Virgin pure* as the most refined *Gold*; his *Life* well represented by the *Incense*, being nothing but a continual service of *God*, and a perpetual doing of his *Fathers* business. His *Death*, the very manner of it evidently pointed at by the *Myrrhe*, which in his *Passion* was given him in *Wine* to drink: the usual draught of those that died upon the *Cross*. And his *Resurrection*, easily enough understood by the same *Myrrhe*, whose chief use is to preserve the dead body from *Corruption*, out of an hope of a *Resurrection*; and was even literally done unto him by *Nicodemus*, who brought a mixture of *Myrrhe* and *Aloes* to embalm him, *St. John xix. 39.*

So now we see what it is to present *Gold*, *Frankincense*, and *Myrrhe* to *Christ*, even no less than to believe him to be *God* and *Man*, our *King*, and *Priest*, and *Trophet*, born of a *Virgin*, without stain of sin, living in all holiness

lineſs without blame, and dying for us ; yet not ſeeing Corruption, but riſing again to Incorruption. This is the Faith we are to offer up, this triple Faith. Fear we not any adverſaries or calamities, he is our *King* to protect us ; *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, 1 Tim. vi. 15. Deſpair we not though we be grievous finners ; he is our *Prieſt*, our High-Prieſt to offer for us, and reconcile us. Let not even Death affright us ; by his death, Death hath loſt its ſting : the *Myrrhe* of his embalming will preſerve us, and by his *Reſurrection* he will revive and raiſe us up. Let us thus think of *Chriſt*, and truſt upon him ; and we ſtill offer this ſame offering of *Gold, Frankincenſe, and Myrrhe*.

This is the *Allegory*, the *Moral* is behind : and in the *moral* ſenſe we offer *Gold, Frankincenſe, and Myrrhe*, who preſent *God* with thoſe *vertues* that reſemble them.

Fiſt, He offers *Gold*, who patiently and conſtantly ſuffers for his Faith, which is *far more precious*, ſays *St. Peter*, than of *Gold that periſheth*, though it be tried with the fire, 1 Pet. i. 7. The *Martyrs* flames are brighter than *Gold*, and the conſtant Faith will endure the fire better than the *Gold* it ſelf.

He (2.) offers *Gold* who ſets himſelf to keep *Gods Commandments*, which in the *Pſalmiſts* account, *Pſal. xix. 10.* are more *deſirable than Gold, yea, than the fineſt Gold*.

He (3.) offers *Gold* who diſperſes it abroad, and gives it to the poor ; he that gives *Alms*, properly offers *Gold* ; to the poor indeed he gives it, but to *God* it is he offers it : an offering of a ſweet ſavour to him.

2. He offers *Frankincenſe* who offers *Prayers*, whoſe *Prayers* aſcend like *Incenſe* : 'Tis holy *David's* expreſſion, *Prayers ſet forth as Incenſe*, *Pſal. cxli. 2.* no *Incenſe* ſo ſweet, ſo acceptable to *God*, as the devout *Prayers* of his ſervants.

He (2.) preſents *Incenſe* whoſe hope is only in the *Lord his God*, whoſe deſires and hopes are always aſcending upward.

He (3.) preſents *Incenſe* who preſents humility and obedience : the nature of *Frankincenſe* is binding and reſtricting, well imitated by obedience and humility ; the beſt binders and reſtrainers of our wills and paſſions.

3. And laſtly, he offers *Myrrhe* who mortifies his affections, which are upon the earth. *Myrrhe is a mortifier*. One quality of *Myrrhe* is to kill *worms* ; he that kills theſe worms of our inordinate deſires, that come crawling on us, thoſe covetous deſires that lie gnawing us ; thoſe wriggling motions of any luſts that are ever tickling, diſturbng us, he offers *Myrrhe*.

2. He preſents *Myrrhe* that preſents his body chaſte and pure. *Judith* that chaſte Matron is ſaid to waſh her body and anoint it with *Myrrhe*, *Judith 10.* as it were a preſervative againſt luſt, and the *Spouſe* in the *Canticles*, ſo fair, ſo pure, ſo undefiled, is much delighted with *brndles of Myrrhe* ; her very hands drop ſweet ſmelling *Myrrhe*. It is ſo great an *Antidote* againſt all impurity and corruption.

3. He preſents *Myrrhe*, who though he hath not perhaps altogether kept his body pure, or his affections in order, yet begins now at laſt to take his *wine a little mingled with Myrrhe*, that takes of the bitter potion of repentance, who in the bitterneſs of his ſoul repents him of his ſins.

You know now how you may ſtill offer *Gold, Frankincenſe, and Myrrhe*, a conſtant Faith, a regular Life ; Charity and Alms is as good as *Gold*, devout Prayer, a lively Hope, an humble Obedience will paſs for *Incenſe*, a chaſte body,

mortified *affections*, and true *repentance* will be accepted instead of *Myrrhe*. See we to it then, that we have them always ready to present to *Christ*.

Yet there is one *mystery* more to be observed, when they *had opened their treasures*, says the *Text*, and it says it that we may know, we are to *open* our treasures as well as *offer* them. Now to open them before him, is, as it were to say, take what he will, we are content. A voluntary resignation of our selves and all that is ours to his choice, order, and disposing, to deny and renounce our selves, and all that is ours; our own *desires*, our *goods*, our *good deeds*, our *merits*: or to leave all to follow him, if he so will have it, is the most perfect of all our offerings, and the perfection of them all. It is both the beginning and end of *Christianity*; so we begin our Christianity with the same resignedness, we must continue it to the end.

And we may yet observe *how* to offer here as well as *what* to offer. Open we our treasures first, do it *freely*, that we do, *all* our treasures. (2.) Do it *plentifully*, and *largely*, *Dorcas-like*, full of good works, and alms-deeds: let our good works and graces glitter like the refined Gold. (3.) Do them *pure* and *sincerely*. (4.) That they may ascend like *Incense*, do them *religiously* and *devoutly*. (5.) Let them be wrapt up in *Myrrhe*, to keep them from *corruption*. (6.) Let them all be like sweet smelling *Myrrhe* of good *odour* and *report*. (7.) Let them also be imbittered with *Myrrhe*, with the bitter tears of repentance, that we have presented *God* so little good, and the tears of sorrow that we can present no *better*. (8.) Let them be done in *order*, our incense in the middle, our prayers wing'd on the one hand with the golden wing of *Faith*, on the other with purity *white* (as is says *Pliny*) the purest *Myrrhe*, a faithful heart, and pure hands, encompassed on the one side with Alms, on the other with Mortification and Fasting: First believe, then pray, then practise. First believe *Christ's* word and promises, then pray for his assistance, then practise his obedience. And *lastly* all our doings, all our offerings must be presented by falling down, with humility, and prayer. So we began the Sermon, and so we end it.

So will he who accepted the *wise men* and their *gifts* accept us and ours, and for our gifts give us better; for our earthly, heavenly treasures; for our *Gold* the Crown of *Glory*; for the incense of our prayers that we offer here, the honour to offer there, the holy odours of eternal praises; for our bitter *Myrrhe* we suffer here, the full sweetness of all pleasure there; and for our falling down shall one day raise us up again to everlasting glory, to worship him that sits upon the Throne, and the Lamb for evermore. *Amen.*

A
S E R M O N
UPON

St. Paul's Day:

Preached at St. Pauls.

NEHEM. xiii. 14.

Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the Offices thereof.



And even to remember our selves concerng *this*, of the good deeds done to *this* House of God, and to the Offices thereof have I chose the *Text* to day.

A day, by all probable conjectures from the ancient great *solemnity* we find upon it, the Feast of the *Dedication* of this reverend and aged Pile, either at the first or second building of it, when it was first presented to God to be remembred by him. A Day *here* observed, not only in memory of St. Pauls Conversion, but of the Conversion also of this place (now St. Pauls) either at the first from the Temple of *Diana*, to the House of God; or of this *Part* of it wherein we are, some hundred of years after from common use, and the renewing of the rest of it out of ashes to the vast proportion it now carries.

And it falling out this Year to be a Day crown'd with so honourable an Assembly, I hope it may fall out happily to remember you of some kind offices, some *good deeds* to it. Now after a *third* Conversion of it from a Stable, a Magazine, a Market, a Meeting place of Schism and Rebellion, to a *Church* again, and the *Holy* Offices in their beauty, to set to your pious hands to help it out of dust and rubbish, and raise it up to its first lustre and glory.

But if the day should have no such reflection, no day could be amiss to remember either our selves, or you, of such good works as God here is not only content to be remembred of, but pleased to remember, puts here upon record too, that *we* also may remember them; Remember
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what good *Nehemiah*, and other pious souls have done in their several times to the House of God, and forget not our selves to do the like.

We have a command from St. Paul (whose day it is) to charge them that are rich to do so, 1 Tim. vi. 18. to be *rich in good works*, and *such* are these. We have a good warrant for it *hence* ; We have a good Pattern *here*, and the works put, all, as it were, upon Gods score to pay for *Thrice* it is so in the Chapter, ver. 22. and 31. as well as in the *Text* ; as if God were little less than bound to recompence and reward them. And he will, if we carry not our selves too high upon them ; if we do them with sincerity, and reflect upon them with humility. *Nehemiah* does so. For how good soever the *works* were, the *words* are but a modest recommendation of them to God when they were done, with an humble Petition to Him to accept them. An excellent Precedent to Us, *what* to do in the Case, and *how* to do it.

That we may the better understand *his*, and do our *own*, we make the *Text* into two *generals*.

- I. *Nehemiahs good deeds done to the House of God. And,*
- II. *His Petition to him to remember and accept both him and them, and not blot out either himself or them.*

Or to be more distinct, we shall draw those *Generals* into these *Particulars* ; and consider,

- I. What it was that *Nehemiah* did to the House of God, and to the Offices, that he would have remembred ; the *good deeds that he did*.
- II. That such things done to the House of God, or to the Offices, though but *Ceremoniis*, are *good deeds* ; good indeed, and so to be reputed and remembred.
- III. That as good as they are, *such* (yet) they are as God may in rigour of justice wipe out, and not remember ; such as we had need still, with *Nehemiah*, pray him not to wipe out, but remember.
- IV. That, yet notwithstanding, they are *such too*, as God may, and will be, easily entreated to remember, and not wipe out ; That he, God, *does* remember them, and sets them here upon *Record* for such.
- V. And not only remember *them*, but the person also for them ; *Him* that does them, *Remember Me*.
- VI. But then (6.) *This* must be remembred too, *why* they stand here ; that this *Scripture*, as well as others, was written for our learning, to *remember* us, that (1.) *still* such a House there is, a House of God, with many Offices belonging to it, and good still to be done to *It* and *Them*. That (2.) *good* it is to do so still. That (3.) God even now also will remember such good deeds ; and *such* also (4.) as shall do them. Would have us (5.) do so too. Would have us (6.) *remember* sometimes our selves to do them. But be sure (lastly) when they are done, to beg of him not to touch too hard upon them, lest he wipe them out. *Remember*, &c. you have both the *Sum*, and the *Particulars* of the *Text*. I go on with the *First* of them, What it was that was here done to the House of God ; and there, first, shew you the *Person*, then his *good deeds*.
- I. For the *Person* ; our Book tells us it was *Nehemiah*, but the *Text* has only a plain *Me* to decipher him. That's enough too, so God but remember him. For God is not taken with our titles. The *less* we make of our selves, the *more* always he makes of us.

Indeed,

Indeed, there is not much said any where of his *Genealogy*, and no where so much what he *was*, as what he *did*. The best reckoning Pedigrees is that of *Noahs*, Gen. vi. 9. *These are the Generations of Noah; Noah was a just man, and perfect in his Generations, and Noah walked with God.* This shall be *Nehemiahs*. *Nehemiah* was a good man, pious in his Generations, and *Nehemiah* did good to the House of God. He's of the noblest House who is thus near allied to the House of God; that thus comes closest to it.

And yet *Nehemiah* was no mean man, neither Cup-bearer to *Artaxerxes* King of *Persia*, Chap. i. 11. the *Tirshatha*, Chap. viii. 9. or *Governour of Judea*, Chap. v. 14. had honour and eminence enough; but stands upon record most for his Piety. *That* out-vies all Names of Honour. The Repairer of *Gods* House a better Title to be remembred by in *Gods* Catalogue of *Nobility*, and in the Court of *Heaven*, than the greatest Emperours Cup-bearer, or the *Viceroy* of *Judea*, nay, of *Emperour* of East and West.

This only by the way, that *He* forgets himself, and *God* will not remember him, who thinks his Honour and greatness exempt him from the service of *Gods* House, or values any beyond it. *King David* himself had rather be a door-keeper there, than dwell any where else; *One day there better*, says he, *than a thousand*, Psal. lxxxiv. 9, 10. And one poor *Me* is worth as many *worships* and *Honours*; that single Syllable, of as few Letters as you can make it, with a few good deeds to back it, better than all glorious Titles without them.

But enough of so small a Particle. Enough too here of the Person considered in himself, because I shall speak of him all the way in his good deeds. To which now I pass, and enquire (1.) What he did to the House of God; and then (2.) What to the Offices thereof.

And the several readings give us them under two Heads: *Misericordias* and *Beneficentiam*. His Mercy and his Bounty to them both; both House and Offices.

His *Mercy* to the House, that I begin with; and *that* take in these particulars: In his *Compassion* towards it, his *Petitioning* for it, his *Repairing*, his *Cleansing*, his *Protecting* it. Give me leave to trace the *Story*, as 'tis fit I should, and I shall shew you them in some or other of the neighbouring *Chapters* as they rise.

1. His *Compassion* towards it, *that* we may easily see in his sitting down and weeping over the ruines, in his fasting and sadly praying for it, Chap. i. 4. For 'tis not *Hierusalem* only, or principally either, (though first mentioned) for which he does so, but *Sion*, the place that *God* had chosen to put his Name there, ver. 9. For *that* it is; because of the *House* of the *Lord* his *God* that he thus seeks, O *Hierusalem*, to do thee good. *David* plainly professes so for himself, Psal. cxxii. 9. And for *Sion*, *Thy servants*, says he, *they think upon her stones, and it pittieth them to see her in the dust*, Psal. cii. 14. All good men still it does as much, they more bewail the ruines of *God's* houses than of their own. Alas! *Hierusalem* is but a sad dwelling without *Sion*, no more than any other City, any ordinary *Heathen* City; not the City of the great *King*, or a sure refuge without that. Even a Fox as *Tobiah* the *Ammonite* jeer'd it, Chap. iv. 3. if he go up shall break down the wall, if the wall of the *House* be not joyn'd to it, and built with it. 'Tis for this principally *Nehemiah* mourn's, and maks as it were a *Cement* for it out of the rubbish by the mixture of his tears. 'Tis a *Tender mercy*; that first.

2. But

2. But he does not meerly and dully sit down and weep, end the business *there*; Up he gets (2.) and to the *King* he goes, and petitions him for a *Commission* to repair it, *Chap. ii. 7.* Begs of him some supplies and materials towards it. Good it is to do good to the House our *selves*, but 'tis doubled when we can work *others* to it too; when we promote it with our friends, and put our selves, as it were, to the blush to beg for it. 'Tis yet a mercy we need not blush at, a holy impudence in doing good; a very serviceable mercy, a mercy not ashamed of any thing to do good to *Gods* house, or any thing that is his. That's a *second*.

3. These yet are but the *Proems* of his mercy. He, *thirdly*, sets closely to the work: provides necessaries and materials for the *House*, and begins the repairs, completes the unfinished *walls* and *Turrets*, not of the *City* only, but the *Temple* too, where ere they wanted, *Chap. iii.* It had been begun to be re-edified by *Zerubbabel*, *Ezra vi.* Where, by the way, take notice they *began* their building with *Gods* House then; yet it seems it was not fully finished. Great *works* are not the business of a *little* time, not of days, but years. (Above forty years in building was *this* House wherein we are.) Nor are such *Houses* at any time so perfect at the last, but that a religious hand will easily find somewhat or other always to be added to their beauty and glory. And *this* is a point of *Nehemiahs* mercy too; A mercy that thinks no pains too much, no time too long to continue doing good to the House of God: "a *laborious* and *continued* mercy. That's the *third*.

4. Nay, sometimes it seems (and *we have found it by our own experience*) that the *House* is not fully finished, yer it is afresh polluted. *Nehemiah* (4.) is fain to cleanse it. *Tobiah*, the *Ammonite*, his household-stuff was gotten into the House, *Chap. xiii. 5.* The *High Priest*, his Allie, had brought it thither. When the *Priest* himself profanes the House, lets the *Ammonite* come in, or suffers it, *God* help us. *God* help us indeed to some good *Nehemiah* to throw out that stuff, as you may see ours does, *Chap. xiii. 9.* A cleansing, purifying mercy the House needs sometimes, needed it we remember too long. Such is *Nehemiahs* too. A *clean, pure* mercy. That's the *fourth*.

5. And yet the *Ammonite* is not so easily cast out. *Nehemiah* must stand to what he has done, and still protect it, or *Sanballat*, *Tobiah*, and *Geshem*, the *Horonite*, the *Ammonite*, and the *Arabian*, all *Sefts*, *Schism*, *Atheism*, and *Prophaneness* will in again. If the *Princes* Authority, and the *Magistrates* Sword do not protect, as well as recover it from unhal- lowed hands and Offices; 1. From corrupt *Priests*, such as *Eliafbib*, ver. 7. 2. From false ones, such as cannot prove their *succession*, *Chap. vii. 64.* 3. From such as pollute it with *strange marriages*, as one of the *Sons of Joiada*, ver. 28. *strange mixtures*, (suppose the waters of the *Tiber*, the *Frith*, or the *Leman Lake* with the *Springs* of *Sion*.) 4. From *strange Levites* too, so strange that we know not whence they came, nor what their *Pedigree*; even in those mercies of the most *Highest*, which he hath lately shewed us, contrary to the *Psalms*, we shall all miscarry. 'Tis the highest Commendation of *Nehemiahs* mercies, that he does not forsake the House, but still protects it both from open enemies, and from treacherous friends; the one, by his *Sword* and *Spear*, *Chap. iv. 16.* the other, by the restoring *good order* and *Discipline*, *Chap. xii. 24.* And this is a *courageous* and *constant* mercy; The *Fifth* Commendation of *Nehemiahs*.

And thus you have his Mercies to the *House* it self, His *compassion* on the *Ruines*, his *soliciting* the *Repairs*, his setting *himself* upon the *work*, his
delivering

delivering the house from *prophanation*, his *protecting* it from the *prophaners*; 1. a tender, 2. active, 3. laborious, 4. pure, 5. constant goodness to the House of God. These are the first branches of those *Mercies* which God here commends to us, to be shewn by his to his House.

The *Second* sort are those to the *Offices*. And *Misericordias in Custodiis, in Observantiis, in Ceremoniis*, the several translations of the words again shall serve to head them. *Nehemiah's* good deeds, First, To the *Officers*; Secondly, To the *Offices*; Thirdly, To the *Ceremonies* of the House; these three shall be the Heads.

1. *Misericordias in Custodiis*, taking the *Abstract* for the *Concrete*, His mercies to the *Officers* and *Keepers* of the House; those who are set to watch and keep it, them we take the first. And indeed the *Officers* and *Ministers* they had need of *them* first and last; need all the mercies that *Nehemiah*, or any of you can shew them. For not only, unless the Lord keep the House, but unless *Nehemiah*, the *Magistrate*, do so too, (you the *Reverend Judges*, you the *renowned Governours* of the *City*) the *Watchmen*; the *Priests* and *Levites*, will all labour but in vain. *Tobiah*, by his acquaintance and alliance, *Sanballat*, by his subtilty and pretences, *Geshem*, by his wealth and power, will down with the Walls ere they be well dry; and out with the *Officers* ere they are warm in their work and business. *Nehemiah* therefore, like a stout *Governour*, sticks to them against those enemies of *Sion* and *Hierusalem*, of peace and order, whether open or conceal'd ones; The first of them, *Chap. v.* the other here, *ver. 10.* Against all that have ill will at *Sion*, that envy the prosperity of the House of God, he stands to them and protects them.

He, *Secondly*, disposes and settles them in their proper places, *ver. 30.* of this Chapter, descends to take care even of the *Singers*, and *Porters*, or *Vergers* of the house, *Chap. xii. 45.*

He calls home, *thirdly*, the poor *Levite*, who had been forced to forsake the house for want of maintenance, *Chap. xii. 11.* delivers him from the oppression of such whose policy it was then, and we know is still, to starve the *Levite* or *Minister* out of the House, that so they may either have no *Minster* at all, and so scandalize the *Government*; or none but such as will say and do what they would have them, and so preach it down again.

He, *fourthly*, restores them all to their *rights* and *dues*, establishes them to them too by a Law for time to come, *Chap. x. 32.* and so on.

Lastly, For their better maintenance, and the readier performance of of the holy Office, he commands the holy things and Vessels, *meat-Offerings* and *Oblations*, to their proper Chambers, *in custodias*, to be reserved in their several Wards; *Chap. xiii. 9.* And these in brief are *Nehemiah's Misericordias in Custodiis*, his good deeds to the *Officers* or *Ministers* of the House of God: He defends them against their Enemies; He confirms them in their Places; He delivers them from their Oppressors; He establishes them in their Rights; He Orders all things to their best convenience. Mercies never to be forgotten; and I would our Age would remember them.

2. Yet not *them* only, but *these* that follow too. And *Misericordias in Observantiis* are the next. His Mercies to the *Offices* themselves. Trace we him, as we did before, and we shall find him (1.) restoring the observing of the solemn *Fasts* and *Feasts* in their due seasons, *Chap. viii. 9, 10, 14.* Vindicating (2.) the *Sabbath* from *prophanation*, *Chap. xx. 19.* Making them (3.) a solemn *Form* of *Prayer*, *Chap. ix. 5.* Setting (4.) solemn

Musick, Hymns and Anthems of thanksgivings, Chap. xii. 27. Setting up (5.) the publick reading and teaching of the *Law of God*, Chap. viii. 1. and ix. 3. Re-establishing (6.) the whole *Office of Gods Publick Worship and Service* according to the commandment of *David*, the man of God, Chap. xii. 24. according to the ancient form and fashion.

3. Follow we him a little further, and you will see him (3.) at *Misericordias in Ceremoniis* too, how he behaved himself in the *Ceremonies*, what good then. And if you consider how *reverently* his people demean themselves at holy work ; how devoutly they all *stand up* at the *reading* of the *Law*, Chap. viii. 5. how unanimously they answer *Amen* at the *Prayers and Blessing* ; how they *lift up* their hands, and *bow* their heads, and worship the *Lord* with their faces to the ground, *ver. 6.* how content they are to be bound to the *Statutes and Judgments* as well as the *Commandments* of God, that is, to the *Ceremonials*, and *Judicials*, (for so the words *Statutes and Judgments* do import) as well as to the *Moral Law*, and how he solemnly binds them to it by an oath, Chap. ix. 29. You cannot but say he has wrought a good work indeed upon them, and by this *Mercy* kept them from *disorder and confusion*. *Mercy* I say, for there is none greater than to preserve the Sheep within the Fold, than to keep all in peace and order, and oblige men by *Laws and Oaths* to do their duties, to attend the holy *Offices* diligently in a comely *uniformity*, who otherwise would some of them never think of it, and others, under pretence of *Christian Liberty*, run every day into all unchristian licentiousness and prophane-ness, and wander up and down in eternal errors, and perish in them. And sure, to save them, though against their wills, is a mercy they need not quarrel with.

These now are the several *Mercies* of *Nehemiah* to the House of God, and to the *Offices* thereof.

You will understand them better by his *Bounty*. *Misericordias* fuller by *Beneficentiam*, which is the second sort of his good deeds.

And the first kind of his *Bounty* is his own and his servants labour *freely* bestowed upon the Work. (For 'tis no matter now whether we divide or joyn the *House and Offices*.) In effect it is no less than the *whole Revenues* of his Command and Government ; whilst refusing the Pay of the *Governour*, Cha. v. 15, 18. he suffered it so to run on towards the repairs. It seems he was resolved not to enrich himself (however) by the *Church*, but (as the Phrase is) rather lay out himself upon it.

The second Expression of it is, the free entertainment of one hundred and fifty of those that laboured in the Work at his own Table, at his own charges, *ver. 17.* of that cited Chapter. He would neither grow rich upon the *Churches* charge, or spare his own to enrich, or at least recover *that* to its former greatness.

The third Manifestation of his *Bounty* is his voluntary gift of one thousand *Drachmes* of *Gold* to the *Treasury of the House*, Chap. vii. 70. a kind of springing stream of supplies unto it.

Add now the fifty *Basins* (and *Gold or Silver* they must be) the *five hundred and fifty Priests Garments*, (and they were no little cost, as the *Priests Garments* then were made, *Exod. xxviii. 40.* for beauty, all, and glory) the charging himself, besides, and all the people, with a yearly Tax, or Publick Revenue for the repair and service of the *House*, and you will confess it a bounty beyond expression.

Especially, if you consider not only *that* and *what*, but *when* and *how*, as the Story will inform you, you will say *Misericordias* and *Beneficentiam*

Beneficentiam are lean and meagre words to tell you what he did.

For to undertake this business when all others had given it over, and left it in the rubbish, Chap. i. 2. when their enemies without the Walls eagerly opposed, and as scornfully derided it; and false friends within as subtilly undermined it, Chap. vi. 17. when some of their Nobles dishonourably drew back for fear or interest, Chap. iii. 5. then in a time so difficult, so dangerous, so troublesome; then so vigilantly, so courageously, so industriously to pursue it, as not so much as shift themselves, from weeks end to weeks end, till all was finished, Chap. iv. 23. to be so bountiful to it, too, in a time of dearth and scarcity, as it seems it was, Chap. v. 3. when they had scarce money to buy bread for themselves and families, then to draw both great and small, the chief Fathers, and the meanest people to great Contributions to it, Chap. vii. 71. is so many good deeds together, and so good together, that 'tis nor Greek, nor Hebrew, nor Latine, nor Original, nor Translation can express the goodness. I am sure I have all this while but injured it.

And if we sum up all his Mercies and Bounties, all together; his Tears and Prayers over the desolations, and ruines of Gods House; his Petition and diligence for the repairs; his care and labour in the Work it self; his Zeal and Courage in the cleansing and protecting it; his Friendship and Faithfulness to the Officers and Ministers; his Justice to settle them in their Office; his Mercy to deliver them from such as would disturb them in it; his establishing them in their Rights, and his studying all Conveniences for the holy Office; his restoring the whole Service of the Church for days, for Forms, for State, for Beauty, for Order, for all Solemnity. Methinks I might spare you the trouble of the next Particular I am to give you, to prove them good. Yet, because there are some that are not willing to believe it, I must do it.

If we would yet but believe the very words of the Text, we should need go no further.

Misericordias the Text calls them, Mercies; and Acts of mercy are good sure. We say so when we want it, and call it a doing us good.

Beneficentiam, (2.) Bounty it styles them too, and that's good; *Bonum bene*, good well done; so is *benefacere*; makes him so good that does them, that one would even die to do him good again; for a good man, that is, for a merciful, bountiful man some would even dare to die, Rom. v. 7.

If (3.) you examine the Object of these actions, that's good, for 'tis God. That which is done to his House, is done to him: for if the robbing it be robbing Him, as he tells us 'tis, Mal. iii. 8. the doing good to it must then be the doing good to him.

If you (4.) enquire the intention, that's good too. 'Tis in *Observantiis* and *Ceremoniis*, for Gods Service all; that he may neither dwell slovenly, nor be served so.

Will you have (5.) a point of faith to sanctifie it further? Why, *Deus meus*, is the very cloze of faith; the believing God to be his God, the very reason he is so good to God and His.

To put all out of question. Deeds of this nature God himself styles good. David had it but in his heart to build God a House, and God sends the Prophet purposely to tell him, he did well to think on't; Forasmuch as it was in thy heart to build a House to my Name thou didst well, 2 Chron. vi. 8. Our blessed Saviour himself says as much in the case, of Maries anointing him; (a work which all the Fathers reckon of the same sort with these we speak of) she

had wrought a good work, St. Mar. xiv. 6. Indeed, Judas, and some that he had seduced, with a pretence that it might have been bestow'd much better, they disdained at it, ver. 4. and thought it waste; but remember, I pray, that 'twas but Judas thought so, and some few that he had abused; Christ says, the doing good to the poor (which was the pretence against it) might stay a while, and must give way to it, ver. 7. Charity must give way to Piety; Charity to them, veil to Piety towards him. Nay, so far is it from a waste that is so spent, that Christ seems to justify the very wasting out selves upon it, whilst he so highly commends the poor Widow that had cast into the Treasury of his house all that she had, even all her living, St. Mar. xii. 44. Indeed, it was but two Mites in all, yet that he accepts, the least that is done to him: but 'twas all she had, and that it was which made him prefer it above the richest gifts and presents that were cast in by all the rest. After all this I must tell you, he affects these works so well, (and then they must needs be good) and loves the House so much, that he sets us a pattern of some of them himself; he will not suffer any Vessel to be carried thorow it, St. Mar. xi. 16. and in indignation whips the buyers and sellers out of the very out-parts of it, St. Luk. xix. 45. Twice he did so: First, after he came up from Capernaum, St. Joh. ii. 15. And again when he went up from Bethphage and the Mount of Olives, St. Mat. xxi. 12. Nay, and he cast out all their Seats, and Merchandise, and Money; would not suffer the least marks of prophane or common use be left upon it. I wish we would learn to be so scrupulous in the point, for now you see no reason to scruple their being good.

III. Yet good though they be, they thirdly stand in need of Gods goodness to remember them, as great mercies as we have shewn them, they yet want his mercy to expound them, a *Secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum*, and a *magnitudine bonitatis*, as 'tis expressly, ver. 22. a verse parallel to this, to construe and accept them. Our works are not so perfect but they require it. *Verebar omnia opera mea*, says holy Job viii. 28. He was afraid of the best of them. Nay, though he were righteous, he would not answer God, ver. 15. nor pretend to answer for them. No more will holy David, *I have walked innocently*, O Lord, says he indeed, but yet be merciful to me for all that; both in the same verse, Psal. xxvi. 11. That must be the Plea when all is done. And he that here cries out, wipe them not out O Lord, or remember me concerning them; and ver. 22. Spare me O Lord, or connive super me, wink at me a little; and ver. 33. Remember them for good, intimates plainly enough, they are not so good but they may do well to be wink'd at, may want a pardon, or fear cancelling, or be as well forgotten, or be remembered for evil as well as good.

Yet good notwithstanding we will allow them. But by Gods grace it is they are so: Good but by the Covenant of the Gospel, not the rigour of the Law. Good by an Evangelical *immuta*, Gods favourable interpretation and acceptance, not by the strictness of worth and merit. Good, but overpoised with many bad ones. *Dauids Delicta sua quis*, &c. Who knows how oft he offends? Enough to remember us, we may offend when we think we are doing good; may do best therefore, and shall do safest, not too much to remember them our selves, but leave God in his goodness to remember them.

IV. And that we may do, without any presumption, put God in mind of them now and then. 'Tis my Fourth Particular plain in the Text. And plain too it is, other good men have done so as well as Nehemiah, Hezekiah does

does so, 2 Kings xx. 3. *I beseech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* Some of it was good deeds to this House we speak of. Holy David particularizes his, Psal cxxxii. 1, 2, and so on. Lord (says he) remember David! Why! What of him? Why! *How he swore unto thee, O Lord, and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob.* Well, What was that? Why, That he would not come within the Tabernacle of his house, nor climb up into his bed, he would not suffer his eyes to sleep, nor his eye-lids to slumber, nor the Temples of his head to take any rest, till he had found out a place for the Temple of the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob. This he prays there that God would remember him and all his troubles for it, how he was troubled till he had found it. Him in all his troubles, too, whensoever, he should come in any to deliver him out of all, because of the good he had vowed and intended to the House.

V. But is it only a Prayer that God would remember, Is it not a Record too (5.) that he does? He truly does; you see it here upon Record he does, in the books of his eternal Remembrance. It is here remembered in every Chapter. Your memories cannot be so short but they can tell you it.

The Gospel will tell you it too, tell you God remembers all such deeds as these. *Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preacht (and it shall be as long as there is any preaching) there also that which this woman has done shall be told for a memorial of her.* λαληθήσεται, St. Mat. xxvi. 13. Told, and told again; every body shall speak of it; and it shall never shall be forgotten. The Beam out of the Roof, and the Timber out of the Wall shall tell it. The Ointment upon Aarons head shall run down upon his beard, to wet even the skirt of his cloathing, and the dust it self shall not be able to lick it up.

If we speak of the House it self, that stands an everlasting monument of the Founders Piety. The very Walls of holy buildings, that scarce now raise their heads so high as to be seen, speak yet plainly forth their Founders and Benefactors. God raises up some good soul or other even in the worst of times to revive their Names, (and blessed be they for it.) If we speak of the good done to the Offices of it; those very Offices are but so many Records therefore from Generation to Generation. Not a Rams, not a Goats, not a Badgers skin offered to the building of the Tabernacle, but stands upon Gods File. Not a Cherubs head, not a Lilly, a Flower, or Pomgranate, not a foot or Inch in the sacred Fabrick, not a Farthing, not a Mite to the Treasure of it falls to the ground unremembered, un-numbered. Nay, even Sacriledge and Atheism, after so many Centuries of thriving wickedness, have not yet had the power to obliterate the memories of the Houses of God in the Land. So are the good deeds themselves remembered.

Nor shall they that have ever done them, or shall ever do them, be forgotten. Remember Me, prays Nehemiah; and he was heard in what he pray'd. And you not only see it here, but in the Catalogue made by the Son of Syrach, and long since added near to the very Book of Gods own remembrances. Among the Elect (says he) was Nehemias, his renown is great, who raised up for us the walls (and some of them were to the house of God) that were fallen, and raised up our ruines, Eccclus. xlix. 13. There are others reckoned there upon the same account, Zorobabel was a Signet the right hand, so was Jesus the Son of Josedec, who in their time builded the House, and set us an holy Temple to the Lord which was prepared for everlasting glory, v. 11; 12. there's a memorial indeed. And

And if you would know what this, *to be remembred* is, the parallel verses will tell you three things of it: *Connive super me*, and *parce mihi*; Wink at and pardon me, *ver. 22.* and *Memento in bonum*, remember me for good, *ver. 31.* To have our weaknesses *wink'd at*, our sins *pardon'd*, and our good with *good rewarded*; these three make up *Gods remembring us*. And he shews it particularly to those who do good to the place where his honour dwelleth.

1. Many a default had *Jacob* made, and done some more than *justifiable* sleights in his transactions with his *Brethren*, but one vow for *Bethel*; *Gen. xxviii. 22.* sets all straight again, and makes *God* go on his journey with him. There are weaknesses *wink'd at*, and no reason so probable as *Bethel* for it.

2. *David* had some faults, and great ones, yet *God* says, he turned not aside save only in the matter of *Uriah the Hittite*, *1 Kings xv. 5.* Save that, save many other that we could tell you of, but that we will not rake up those sins that *God* passed by. But why is *God* so tender in the point? Why! *David* was tender over *Sion*, could not pray for the very pardon of his sins, in that great Penitential Psalm of his, but he must needs in the same breath, as it were, remember *Sion*, *Psal. li. 18.* *O be gracious unto Sion*; as if *God* else could not be gracious unto him; or as if otherwise, either the pardon of his sins would do him little good, or else there were no readier or surer way to get them pardon'd than by remembring *Sion*. There's the pardon of sins upon the score.

3. Would you have a remembrance for your good, as well as a forgetting for your evil? Would you have *God* remember you with a blessing too? Why, your kindness to his house will do it. *God* blessed the house of *Obed Edom*, and all that appertained unto him, because of the Ark of *God*, *2 Sam. vi. 12.* All that appertained? 'Tis good dwelling nigh such a man as he. Again, *David* would fain have been building *God* a house, had gotten many materials, and much money ready for it; and *God* promises him upon it, that *He will build him a House for it, and establish him a throne for ever*, *2 Sam. vii. 11, 12, 13.* *God* will be behind hand with none that do good to his Habitation, or really intend or go about it. Nay, the very *Sparrow* is blest, and the *Swallow* is blest that love but his House, that sing their Mattens and Vespers at his Altars; the devout Prophet even envies them for it, *Psal. lxxxiv. 3.* So great are the blessings of the House of *God*, and so ever are those persons under his eye, so in the eye of blessing, whose good deeds are there continually putting *God* in mind of them.

If you would but remember how *God* forgets his mercy, (or which is the same) how he remembers them in Judgment who do ill to his House or to the Offices; how he strikes *Uzzah* dead for an irreverent touch of the Holy Ark; how he smites *Uzziah* with a leprosie for an encroachment upon the sacred Office, *2 Chron. xxvi. 19.* and turns *Saul* out of his Kingdom for the like fault, *1 Sam. xiii. 14.* How he thrusts *Nebuchadnezzar* out of doors, *Dan. iv. 33.* because he had burnt up his Houses in the Land, *1 King. xxv. 9.* 'Tis just, indeed, he should have no House who will let *God* have none. How he despoils *Belshazzar* of his Kingdom, because he had spoild his Temple, and was now prophaning those holy spoils, carousing in the sacred bowles, *Dan. v. 30.* How he quite forgets all mercy to the Jews, and casts them out as soon as they prophaned his holy Temple, and abused his Messengers, Priests and Prophets, *2 Chron. xxxvi. 14.* and professes he could hold no longer when they had arrived at that height of insolent wickedness; How he makes the Heavens forget their dew, and the earth her fruit,

fruit, because *they let his house lie waste*, Hag. i. 9, 10, you will readily conclude, how he remembers those that raise the Walls, and repair the Ruines, and reverence the Sanctuaries, and love the Priests. If *them* with Curses, then *these* with Blessings; if *them* with diseases, then *these* with health; if *them* with exile, *these* with quiet dwellings; if *them* with scarcity, *these* with plenty, *Ubertate Domus*, the plenty of his house; if *them* with desolate and decaying Families, *these* with happy and full Posterities; if *them* with death, *then* *these* with life even for ever and ever.

VI. But 'tis time now to remember *our selves*. And many things we are here to be remembred of.

That (1.) We have a *House of God*, as well as *Nehemiah*, to do good to. Many houses of *God* in the Land *now*, as well as in the *Psalms*, lxxiv. 9. This above the rest, whose decay'd Towers, and ruin'd Pinacles, and ragged walls, and open Windows, and falling Roofs, and broken Pavements, call loud for a *Repairer of the breaches*. And 'tis not *Nehemiahs* Mercy and Bounty, nor the *Levites* thin revenue added, that can do it. Blessed indeed be *God*, that he hath put it into the heart of the *King* to begin, and offer so freely to the Work. But I hope we shall ere long have reason to bless him for your *offerings* too.

This House is *Gods*: all *such* houses *Gods*, as well as that of *Bethel*, or that of *Sion*, or those *Synagogues* of the *Jews*, stiled several times his houses. That they are so, the solemn Dedications always of them to his Name with so much glory say enough. And if *Domus orationis* be *Domus mea*, the House of Prayer be *Gods* (and *Christ* says it is, and sure he knows both what is his own, and how to call it) the daily celebration of that Publick Worship there will give a second proof. That some such there were even in the *Apostles* times, some house besides such as we eat and drink in, that must not be so used, must not be so despised, the *Apostle* tells us, 1 Cor. xi. and that it was then called the *Church of God* in the same verse, is to tell you in plain English our *Churches* are *Gods houses*.

And *God* has in our days own'd them for his own. That signal preserving them in the heat of War and Plunder, rage and fury, when men were so wrathfully displeased at them, and so implacably set against them. That protecting them (2.) through all the Triumphs of a godly Atheism, and a sacriledge out of *Conscience*, both as unsatisfied as the grave, so miserably greedy that they would violate their Fathers Sepulchres, and scatter their ashes in the air and wind, for an inconsiderable piece of lead, or brass, or stone; That miraculous restoring them (3.) to all the holy *Offices*; this *Church* in particular destined to a *sale*, and deferred only to see who would give most, are evidences of it, too great to be disputed, that *God* has vindicated his right, and kept it for himself. And I hope you will all remember it, and now help him in it, Court and City, both of you.

And remember, (2.) These *Houses* have their *Officers*, their *Offices*, their *Ceremonies*, as well as that here in the *Text*. *Offices* to be performed, *Officers* to perform them, and *Ceremonies* to perform them with. Your countenancing, your encouraging, your protecting them, are the good deeds you may do to them.

Remember therefore (3.) I beseech you that you do so. Three arguments there are in the *Text* to perswade it. (1.) Good it is to do so, good deeds they are. *God* (2.) will remember them when they

they are done. God (3.) will remember *you* for doing them.

1. Good they are, remember *that*. And good works are a good foundation, 1 Tim. vi. 19. a foundation upon which you may lay hold on *eternal life*, says St. Paul there; and can you desire a better?

Indeed, Judas tells us, it would do better upon the poor. But had he had the selling of the Ointment *then*, or when some of his Disciples had the selling of it *since*, Were the poor ever the better for it? Were not thousands sent a begging by it? Sure, sure, he that can be content to see the Church in ruins, will not much pass to see the poor in rags. He that envies the Church-mans wealth, will never pity the poor mans want; and he that one time sells the Church, will next time sell the poor, if he can get by him. But we will not set good deeds together by the ears. 'Tis enough that these are good: but 'tis more (2.) that God remembers them; that he takes a particular notice of them.

2. I may say, too, a notice of the particulars. The *Scrowles* of them are laid up for an everlasting remembrance. Feasts of Dedication have been always kept for a memorial of them; and Christ himself vouchsafed to be present at them, St. Joh. x. 22. And if the Syriac Translator may be allowed to read the last verse of the Chapter, *Et ad oblationes, & ad sacra temporibus & Festis Statutis memoriam hujus rei mihi serva*; we see these good deeds were solemnly remembred in those solemn Feasts; and Nehemiah expected *his* should be so. Their persons have anciently been remembred in the Christian Dypticks. And you see to day we have revived the Custom here.

3. But 'tis not a meer remembring them for honour, but also a real remembring them, and them that do them for a blessing, all sorts of blessings. So that would I commend to my dearest friend a Trade to make him rich and happy, it should be doing good to the House of God. 'Tis an old Jewish saying, *Decima ut dives fias*; Pay thy Tyths if thou wilt grow rich. Build God a House, say I, and he will build thee one again; Do good to His House, say I, and he'll do good to thine; and a wicked Son shall not be able to cut off the Entail. For 'tis worth the notice, that when God promised David a House upon this account, he tells him, that though his Son commit iniquity he would not utterly take his mercy from him. I know there are that to be excused, talk much of unsetled times. This is the way to settle them: When God and man shall see we are in earnest for the House of God, and the Offices thereof, all your *Seets* will cease to trouble you, and vanish. Some cry, the State must be settled first. Why! *Fundamenta ejus in montibus Sanctis*, says the Psalm; the foundations of Hierusalem are upon the Holy Hills. Lay your foundations there, and you shall never be removed, God of his goodness will make your Hill so strong. No better way to fix the House of the Kingdom, or your own, than to begin with His. Others (to get loose) tell us of the decay of Trade. Why! how can it be other, says God, Hag. i. 9. *You looked for much, and it came to little, and when you brought it home, (and 'twas scarce worth bringing home) I did blow upon it; blew it into nothing.* And why was it says the Lord of Hosts? *Because of my house that lieth waste, and ye run every man to his own house.* You dwell in Cedars, and you lap yourselves in Silks and Silver, and you have all neat and fine about you; but the House of God, that lies in the dust and rubbish. But is it time for you (O ye, says he, for I know not what to call you) to dwell in cieled houses, and my house lie no better? Did God, think you, make Gold and Silver, Silks and Purples, Marbles and Cedars, for us only and our houses, and not for himself also or his own? Or do you think

think to thrive by being sparing to it, or holding from it? No, says *God*, from the day that the Foundation of the *Lords Temple* was laid, consider it, from this, *that day will I bless you*, Hag.ii.18,19. And prove him so (say I, for he bids so himself, *Mat.iii.10.*) and see if *he will not pour you out a blessing*.

Indeed, he has been *before* us with it. He has brought us home, and *stablished* our Estates, and *restored* our Religion; done more to us, and to our *houses* than we durst desire or hope; and is it not all the reason in the world we should do good to *his* again? Hang up our remembrances upon the *walls*, pay our acknowledgments upon his *Altars*, and bless all the *Offices* of his house for so great blessings? *God* will remember you again for what ever it is. If you would yet more engage him to you, know *God loves the Gates of Sion more then all the dwellings of Jacob*, Psal.lxxxvii. 2. must needs therefore love *these* most, that most love *them*.

And I doubt not but we shall find many here that do so, many too, that will so express it. Yet not according to what a man has not, but to what he has, says our *St. Paul*, does *God* accept him. We cannot expect that all that love most can express most. Yet according to their abilities they will do it. A cup of cold water, I confess, to a *Prophet*, in the name of a *Prophet*, shall not lose the reward, no more shall a single *Mite* to the house of *God* as *his*. Every one however may do somewhat towards it. They that cannot give much, may give a little, they that cannot pay, may yet pray for it. And to wish it well, and to rejoyce in the prosperity and welfare of it, the repairing and adorning of it, are two *mites* that any one can give, and *God* will accept where there can be no other. Only, where there is *most*, we must present it with humility, as *David* did, 1 *Chron.* xxix. (*what am I, O Lord, that I should be able after this sort to offer, thus to do it?*) And where there is but little, we must present it with a regret that we can do no more.

Will *God* remember and accept us; remember and pardon us; remember and bless us, with blessings of the right hand, and blessings of the left; remember us in all places, both at home and abroad; in all conditions, both in the days of our prosperity, and in the time of trouble; in our goings out, and in our comings in; in our Persons, and in our Estates; in our selves, and in our Posterities, with them shall remain a good inheritance, and their children shall be ever within the *Covenant*. And when all *earthly* glances shall be forgotten, that which we have done to the *House* of *God* shall be still remembred; when our bodies shall lie down in dust, our names shall live in heaven; when a cold stone shall chill our ashes, our bones shall flourish out of their graves; when time shall have eaten out our *Epitaphs*, our righteousness shall not be forgotten, *God* will remember it for ever. And though the general conflagration shall at last calcine these glorious structures into ashes, we shall dwell safe in buildings not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where the *Lord God Almighty*, and the *Lamb* shall be the *Temple*, and we sing the *Offices* of heaven with *Angels*, and *Archangels*, and all the holy Spirits, with joy and gladness for evermore.

To which glorious House and Office *God* of his mercy bring us in our several times and orders through, &c.

THE FIRST SERMON

On the Day of the
PURIFICATION
OF THE
Blessed Virgin.

St. LUKE ii. 27, 28.

— *And when the Parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the Law.*

Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God.



ND when. That *when* was as this day. *when* the days of the blessed Virgins Purification, according to the Law of Moses, were accomplished forty days after Christs Nativity, this day just, then they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, ver. 22. Then blessed Mary and Joseph brought, then devout Simeon, and Anna, blessed; and if we be either Maries, or Anna's, Josephs, or Simeons, holy men, or devout women, we too, will this day bless God for the blessing of the day.

For this day also of his presentation, as well as those other days of his Birth, Circumcision, and Manifestation, Candlemas-day as well as Christmas-day, New-years-day, or Epiphany, is a day of blessing; a day of Gods blessing us, and our blessing of him again: of Christs being presented for us, and our presenting to him again; of his presenting in the Temple, and our presenting our selves in the Church, to bless God and him for his presentation, his presentation-day, and our Candlemas, our little candles, our petty lights; our souls reflecting back to this great light, that was this day presented in the Temple, and then darted down upon us,

The *Shepherds* blessed God in the morn of his Nativity, the *wise men* upon Epiphany, Simeon and Anna to day. All conditions before, all sexes to day; ignorant *Shepherds*, and learned *Clerks*; poor Country-men, and great

great Princes: no condition out before, and both Sexes in to day. Sinners both of Jew and Gentile; men that most stood in need of a Saviour before, just and righteous souls to day, that we might know there is none so good but stands in need of him one day or other, that will want a Saviour, if not at *Christmas*, yet at *Candlemas*; if not among sinners, yet among the righteous, either first or last. *Mary* the blessed, *Joseph* the just, *Simeon* the devout, *Anna* the religious, all in to day, secular and religious of all sexes and orders; all come in to day, as at the end of *Christmas*; like the *Chorus* to the *Angels* Choire, to bear a part in the *Angels* Anthem, to make up a full choire of voices to glorifie God for this great present, which brings peace to the earth, and good will among men.

And this day first is it given into our arms. In all the former Festivals he is either in his Mothers lap, or in his Cradle, or to be sure not out of doors; there only, or within only is he to be seen. This day first he comes abroad to be handled by us. Before indeed he might be thought to concern us somewhat: Now first, are we made sensible of it, when we may take him into our own arms, and kiss him, in the Prophet *David's* expression, kiss this Son of the most high, as he lies in our arms.

He was made man at his birth, made under the Law at his *Circumcision*, made manifest to the *Gentiles* at his *Epiphany*, but all this while at a kind of distance from us. This is the day of a nearer application to us, when he is first made a present and offering for us; for us, who were none of us, I am sure, in any case to be presented for our selves; not pure, not clean, not whole, not holy enough any of us to be presented before God, till he was first presented to make us accepted. When he is (2.) made a present and offering to us, presented and offered to us to be taken, embraced, and offered up again by us, to make all our offerings and our selves accepted in this beloved.

For this it is in the sum, that we are this day to blefs God (as I hope we have done on other days for the other) that this beloved of his would thus still, again and again, more and more, undergo the condition of men, make himself of no more account than an ordinary man, be valued and redeemed at the ordinary rate of the poorest Child, as this day he was. That (2.) he would let his Mother too, be reckoned in the rank of the meanest women that were not able to offer beyond a pair of Turtles, or young Pigeons, and go for one that had need of Purification as well as other women; as if she were no better than the rest after this great Child-birth, though without the least spot or impurity in the whole business both of Conception and Child-birth: In a word, that he would thus condescend, and descend too into our very arms to be offered for us, and offered by us.

There are four remarkable passages of the day. (1.) The blessed *Virgins* Purification. (2.) Our blessed Saviours Presentation. (3.) Good *Simeons* Exultation. And (4.) Religious *Anna's* Gratulation. There are but two of them in the Text, *Christs* Presentation, and *Simeons* Exultation; The other two are not now within our compass; some other time they may. These two will at this time be enough; especially being not only to consider what was done then, but what must be still; not only what by others, but also what by us; our own duty as well as *Christs* Parents, and *Simeons* performances; what they did for him then after the custom of the Law, what we for him now after the Law is out of custom, and fashion, after the fashion and custom of the Gospel. For does blessing or blessedness belong only to the Law? do they not more to the Gospel? certainly much

more. *Simeon* only was the *Precentor*, began the Song which is to continue to the end of the world. And though *Simeon* be departed according to his wish, yet has the Church throughout it taken up the *Hymn*, and sings it every evening, as a perpetual memorial of this days *Benediction*. So our blessing to continue, as well as God's; ours to him, as well as his to us: and his is such, that it will never fail, but extend the vertue of this days great *present* unto all generations.

I have already divided you the *Text*, whilst I told you two of the great remarkables of the day were in it, *Christs Presentation*, and *Simeons Gratulation*: *Christs Presentation* to God, and his acceptance by man. Christ presented in the Temple according to the Law, Christ received into the arms according unto Faith.

The first of these in the 27. verse, which runs thus, *And when the Parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the Law.* There's his *Presentation*.

The second of the points is in the 28. verse, *Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God.* There's his *Reception*, or *Simeons Acceptation* of him, or *Gratulation* and *Exultation* over him.

Of each of these first in reference to them, then afterward to our selves. First, to inform you what was done, then to teach you what to do. I begin with what was done, and first with *Christs Presentation*, where we are to pass thorow these particulars. The presenters, the presented, the time, the place, the manner of presenting this great present.

The Presenters were the *Parents*, the Presented was the *Child Jesus*, the time was *when the days of her purification were accomplished*, the place, the *Temple*, and the manner *according to the custom of the Law*: all according to order, and that also keep we now.

The presenters first in *that*, first in order, and first in fitness too. Who fitter to present the Child then its own *Parents*. *Jus liberorum*, the power over the Child is properly theirs. Nature makes it so; they give it being; and therefore surely have most right to it when it is in being, and whilst it is so; till God by a second Law either take it to himself, or dispose it to another, for which it naturally almost leaves its Parents to increase it self.

Upon the first title, of Gods claim to it they here bring it to him; but so they receive it back again with greater comfort: we lose nothing that we give to God, we do but bring it to him only for a blessing to it, and depart with both. The Parents never can be surer of the Child, then when they first give it unto God: Fathers and Mothers may learn by these good folks thus to sanctifie, as it were, their Children from the breast.

Both Parents agree here, nor the tenderness of the one, nor the austerity of the other think much of Gods demands, though it seem to entrench much upon their right, their very natural right. Nature it self must veil and submit where God pleads interest: even that eternal and inviolable law of preserving our selves, and ours, is circumscribed within the limits of Gods prerogative, and we must do neither, but with submission to his pleasure to dispose of us and ours.

Yet Parents here under the notion of *parents*, seems very strange. *Joseph* having no part in his geniture; yet so the law sometimes calls both the Step-father and Step-mother: No wonder then to hear *Joseph* so entitled, who in the eye of the world, and term of law (that reaches not extraordinaries, nor provides words for miraculous conceptions) was counted father

father in the very proper acception. Only this to be said. Common fame may be deceiv'd, and names affix'd where not deserv'd. And titles often to be accepted too rather than venture an harsh and untimely censure upon our selves or them, that are very near us, by the discovery of an unseasonable truth.

Truth it was that *Joseph* was not his Father, that both *Joseph* himself and the *Evangelist* well knew. Yet would the one speak after the vulgar language rather than cross received terms at the first in the recital of a story which might lose its credit by so early a discovery of a mysterious truth, but might with little offence be corrected in the progress: nor would the other proclaim himself no Father, lest that most pure and immaculate *Virgin* should run the hazard of lewd tongues, and the great wonders of the most high be blasphemed, and his Son dishonoured with a name, which these late sons of Hell only durst belch out.

Call we them both then, still, if we think good, the *Parents* of this *Child*: However a Foster-father *Joseph* was, and by that relation had a title to this *presentation*, and we by it another lesson to take care of those we undertake for, as for our own, to present, and offer them also to God, to consecrate them also betimes to Gods service. Seasonable words hence remember we ever to observe (2.) not upon every hint to cross the road of speech. (3.) To conceal a while unseasonable truths. (4.) To take care of the fame and honour of others. (5.) To perform our duties with all tenderness to our charges, and however dedicate them to the disposal of the Almighty.

Thus much we may learn by the *Presenters* and their title, and our unhappy times make us the readier to make another note to take notice of this happy juncture, where both *Parents* agree about the *Child*, both bring him. Our divisions are so encreas'd upon us, that those whom God has nearest joyn'd are so wide separated in this business, that the unfortunate *Child* is kept from being presented unto God: God deprived of his right, and the *Child* of the benefit by the perverseness of the one or other of the *Parents*; the *Child* neither brought to the Church, nor God, done for neither, according to Law nor Custom, but barr'd Christianity, denied to God at first, and in danger to be denied by him at the last, through the division of the *Parents* in Religion and Sect. A joyful sight it is methinks to see them here united for the *Childs* good; the more for that our dissensions of *Parents* look so ugly, and are so deeply prejudicial to Gods honour, and the *Childs* both benefit and right which it has to be presented to God in holy *Baptism*. It may yet prove worse in the education, if the difference still continue between the *Parents*; and the *Child* which unbaptized cannot be conceived to have any greater assistance of inward Grace, than the *Child* of a *Heathen* or a *Jew*, being both by nature; and 'tis to be feared by the *Parents* irreligion, yet further punished by a leaving it meerly in that state, proner far to evil than good, to error than truth: Such a *Child* it cannot be expected in reason, but that it should adhere to the worser part: and as it lost its *Baptism* at the first, so at the last miss its Religion too. God being denied it when he would have it, and calls for it to have it brought to him, we can have no great confidence that he will at another time accept it, when it is grown out of that number of little ones, whom he calls, become greater in its corruption, and the first-fruits of his age dedicated to another Master. God send better agreement among *Parents*, say I, be it for the *Childrens* sake, that they may be presented to the Lord.

A *Child* it is that is presented in the *Text*, and in the *day*, and the *Child Jesus*; such a *Child* is both example and authority enough for us to bring ours also to the Lord, whilst they are such: unless we think our Children are holier than he, want less than he, can be without God better than he, more above the Law than he.

But he calling for them himself, *Suffer little children to come unto me*, St. Mat. xix. 14. It seems to me both ingratitude and impudence to keep them from him; to say nothing of the infidelity in so doing: as if we believed him not, that he meant it when he called, or we thought he could do them no good if they came; or that he would not, or that they were as well without him as with him, without his blessing as with it. It may be they will tell us he call'd them indeed, but not to Baptism, did not Baptize them when they came. Poor silly men! would they have him Baptize the Children before their Fathers, before they themselves were fitted for it; by whom only the Children have right to it? or Baptize them when they were not brought by them to that purpose? Is it not enough that Christ desires, and accepts the Children that are brought to him, that come to him? And how come they now to him, but by Baptism? How has the Universal Church from that day to this brought Children to him? Has it not been to Baptism, in all Catholick Doctrine and Practice to this day? Have we now at all found any better way to bring them to him? None at all, alas! and is that better?

Their Children (forsooth) are holy, because their Fathers are, alike I think, that is, under the bondage of corruption; their Fathers holy! I would we could see it once: But suppose them so, were there no holy Fathers among the Jews, that their Children must all receive the Sacrament of Circumcision, to which our Baptism succeeds to hollow them? Ay, but God now has promised to be the Father of them, and of their seed; and did he not so to *Abraham* first, *Gen. xvii. 7.* and yet must his Children be Circumcised. What is it (trow) that these men would have? Must the *Jews* dedicate their Children, and must not the *Christian*? were the Jewish Children Gods right, and are not the Christians? Do not we owe ours as much to him as they theirs? Or must their Births be happy by an early Consecration, and ours not? theirs in a better condition under the wing of the Almighty, ours in a meer natural state in our own meer protection? theirs seal'd for Gods own, ours without seal, or any thing but their Fathers sin to know them by, challeng'd wholly to our selves; as if God had neither part nor portion in them. Certainly did men but thus consider, Children would not be so much injur'd by their Parents frowardness; and could Children and sucklings understand it, they would complain of so great an injury done to them, the most imaginable that can be done to that tender age, thus to be deprived of the blessing, and taken out of the protection, as much as lies in their Parents power, of their God and Saviour.

Thus far we have considered only Gods right, and the Childs good in being brought into the Temple. See we now the Parents Devotion, and God honoured by it.

They brought in the *Child*; and what better present can they bring, can any Parents bring and offer than a Child? how can they express their Devotion more to God, than by offering what is dearest?

Now he brings his Child to God, that brings it to be Baptized, to be instructed, to be brought up in the fear of God, and the practice of true Religion.

He

He (2.) brings him more peculiarly that devotes him to some peculiar Service of the Church, as *Anna* did *Samuel*, to the service of the *Tavernacle*.

He (3.) brings him to God, that commends him daily in his prayers to God for a blessing; as *Abraham* did *Ismael* in that Petition, *O that Ismael might live before thee*.

He (4.) brings him to God, that resigns him wholly at any time to God's disposal both in health and sickness, both in plenty and want, for any fortune or condition that God thinks fit or convenient for him. Indeed there was a strange offering of a Child prescribed to *Abraham*, *Gen. xxii. 2.* to Sacrifice him on an Altar; and God sacrificed this Child at last, his Son upon the *Cross* for us: but he requires not that we should do so with ours. Yet this he does, that with *Abraham* we should so resign the dearest of them to God, that if at any time for his Service he command them from us, and please for the profession of his Name or Truth, to sacrifice them to the flames, or to the *Cross*, any way understood, we should not think much to be so bereaved of them to their greater glory.

All these ways the Child is brought to God, according to the Letter; but in the *Mystery*, he also brings his Child even who has none, that brings what is dearest to him, and submits it to God's pleasure. He (2.) that blesses all his actions at the beginning with his prayers. He (3.) that devotes his first morning thoughts to Heaven. He (4.) that dedicates his first thoughts, motions, and intentions, the first-born of his soul to God's honour and glory. So we may offer Children, that have no Children, bring a Child, who have no Child. Nay more, we may bring the Child, that is, the best of Children, above all Children, the *Child Jesus*; as well the barren Maid, as the most fruitful Mother, may do this. It may be better too, they that have no other Child may best tend upon the *Child Jesus*: they that have none other to care for, have the more care to bestow on him; they that have no other to nurse or bring up, may the easier and fuller apply themselves to nurse him up in their souls, till he be grown up in them to a *perfect stature*; and having no other to bring to the *Temple*, may every day bring him. He was brought here by a *Virgin*, and I know not how he can be brought by any better. Yet by a *Virgin* Mother here, that both *Virgins* and *Mothers*, *Parents* and others, all conditions might have an interest to present him.

And sure no greater present, none more acceptable, no Child to this, to the *Child Jesus*. Bring him with us, and come and welcome; welcome at any time with him. 'Tis in him that all our offerings are accepted; his *Cross* the Altar that sanctifies our gifts: he the *beloved Child* in whom alone God is well pleased.

His *Parents* brought him in without a figure: brought he was before in the type only; and the shadow prefigured in *Isaac*, and *Solomon*, and *Josiah*, and in the offerings and sacrifices of the Law. The great light or candle of this day first dispers'd those shadows; all legal Purification days turned into so many *Candlemas's* by the bringing in of this eternal light, this bright only Child of the *Father of lights*.

But are our candles all put out? ceremony and substance vanish'd too? is it not *Candlemas* still with us? are we returned to that former darkness, and no light left us to offer up? no *Child Jesus* to offer still? Yes, still we have? 'tis an eternal light that this day sprung up beyond the splendor of the Lamps of the *Temple*. We offer *Christ* even to this day still.

He offers *Jesus*, that forms himself to the *image of Jesus*, by putting him

him on as the *Apostle* speaks in righteousness and holiness, by meekness, patience, obedience, charity, and brotherly love, growing up by what degrees he can to the *stature of Christ*, so presenting himself before God: and he that does it in his youth at the first spring of his understanding days, brings the *Child Jesus*, the most acceptable, because the most early and timely offering.

2. He brings and offers *Jesus*, who when he has done all he can, offered all he is able, given all he had, yet renounces all as unworthy; claims nothing by them, thinks them not worth acceptance, but wraps them all up in Christ's Mantle, presents his Merits as the only offering, his Righteousness and abundant satisfactions to sanctifie all his other presents, stands to none, pleads nothing, claims by nothing but only him.

3. He offers *Jesus*, that in a thankful remembrance of his love, offers him up in the holy Sacrament, as the only sacrifice of Thanksgiving, beyond all other possible praises; and for an atonement and reconciliation for his own sins, and the sins of all the world. 'Tis time we set aside some time for such an Offering, and in the *Text* we find it, though not explicitly, yet necessarily implied. For, *when the Parents brought in the Child*, will easily tell us, that, a *when*, a time there was, and is a kind of relative conjunction, that by joyning the context will quickly be resolved, within a few years backward, *vers 22.* to be *when the days of her Purification*, the Mothers purification, *were accomplished.*

The Law would not sooner suffer the Mother to come near the Sanctuary, so scrupulous did God seem to be of the pollution of his *Temple*, that he would not accept his own dues and offerings from a hand of that body which had but on it the least semblance of impurity, though it was no other than a meer natural course which himself had made. Nature it self it seems when its motions are but meerly natural, must have nothing to do at the Altars of Holiness. God made all things good, makes many good things which yet he thinks not good enough to approach his holiness, without a previous purification. *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, and their followers may cry out, *the whole Congregation is holy*, all holy enough, any thing good and pure enough for the Temples, Altars, Sacrifices, Services, ministrations of the Lord and his Christ: but it seem'd they wanted fire to cleanse them and their Censers; and God sent it with a vengeance: They would not keep apart from holy Offices, but God parts the earth to sever them from his Altars: and when our sins are sufficiently punished, their followers will find some strange purging fires for thus boldly daring, without purifying their hands, after the law or custom of the Church, to lay them to Christ's plough, before their days be out, either themselves or their days accomplished, not their very apprenticeships out, some of them; so presumptuously intruding into holy Offices, Functions, Offerings, and places: such mens *damnation slumbers not*, though it tarry, it will come sure at last. The holy *Virgin*, who needed no purification for this Child-birth (as not conceiving, as the *Text* runs, *Lev. xii. 2. suscepto semine*) must be purified before she come, though to bring an offering as pure as purity it self. So is Gods method and order, so he requires it, *after the custom of the Law*, it is said here; and were there no reason else, Church-law and custom in Church business in all reason should carry it.

And it being holy business, purification cannot but be a necessary disposition to it; some kind of separation to prepare for it. There is a legal separation, and it did well when it was in use. There is an Evangelical

gelical still in force, an external and an internal both. Holy things not to be medled with, but with holy hands, hands separated from civil and secular employments: none to offer as Priests, but those that are so accomplished with that kind of separation. And none to present neither any thing to be offered, but such as have holy hearts, accomplished with inward purity: Unsanctified hearts and unhallowed hands are not fit to bring in *Jesus*; nor touch the offerings of so pure a God: Not the word, not the Sacraments, not the Services, none of them to be either offered or taken by any he whoever, that hates to be reformed, who is not purified and disposed rightly before he comes.

Forty were the days of this Purification: something there may be in the number. So many days *Moses* prepared for the receiving of the Law, *Exod.* xxiv. 18. So many *Elijah* in his advance to the Mount of God, *1 Kings* xix. 8. So many *Christ* himself before he entred upon his Office, *St. Mat.* iv. 2. So many the *Church* designs for a preparation to *Easter*, as a purification of our souls and bodies, by Prayer and Fasting, against our *Easter* offerings. Whether this number tell us by ten, four times multiplied, that the Decalogue of *Moses* is in the four *Evangelists* completed, the Law perfected by the Gospel. Or that these bodies we bear about us consisting of four Elements, are by the observation of the ten Commandments accomplished with all vertues, and thereby best purified; or that the tenth parts of all our years, to which forty days do well near draw (so many being but little more then the tenth portion of a year) are hereby required to be spent in Gods Service, the purifying of our souls and bodies for his use. Whether it be for the one reason or the other, or the third: for this sure it is, that we may understand a large and considerable portion of our days, is to be always spent in good preparations, purifications, and retirements. Christ can never be too much provided for, nor we too much purified, when we come to take or offer him.

Nor is the place (3.) for that's the next point, where we are to offer, though a great way off, to be complained of for its distance. If it be the place where God has set his name, and appointed for his worship, as far as Mount *Moriah* from *Abrahams* Tents, or the uttermost borders of *Judea* from the Temple; go we must thither, and not think much of it. They brought him in, says the Text, that is, into the Temple at *Jerusalem*. From *Bethlehem* to *Jerusalem* is a pretty walk to go with a young Child to offer: but where God commands there is no gain-saying. There is no burthen neither to such souls as just *Josephs* and blessed *Maries*; and the Child will get no cold by the way it goes to God. Our niceness makes the trouble, and betrays us to the fear. The Child gets no hurt by being carried to the Font; nor did it in devouter times when it was wholly dipt, no more than so great a pain as *Circumcision*, hurt the Infants health. Our tenderness and fooleries, who have not Faith enough to trust God, with them, or to submit mildly to God's Ordinances, are the only causes of all miscarriages in holy business, where we will be wiser than God, tenderer than God, and more careful than God would have us. The greatest argument for this generation not turning *Jews*, is, I think, for fear of *Circumcision*; lest they should put themselves to any pain, or fear to lose their Children by that bloody Sacrament: else I fear they are too well disposed towards it. One thing would much perswade (I am sure) if they might so pull down all our Churches, and have but one to go to once a year: So godly is the age we live in, so well are we reformed.

Yet the fittest place sure for Gods offerings, are God's houses; his own Altars for his own Service: holy places for holy works, for holy offerings: *Templum Domini*, for *Dominum Templi*, as devout Bernard, *The Temple of the Lord the fittest place for the Lord of the Temple*; that the fittest, the likeliest to find him in. So the prophesie, so the desire, call it which you please, of holy David fulfilled, *Suscepimus misericordiam in medio Templi*, Ps. xlviii. 8. *we have found*, or we wait for *thy loving kindness in the midst of thy Temple*. Mercy it self there this day found. We may pray any where and offer, and offer any where either our own Children, or *the Child Jesus*, if necessity so be: but the best souls love the best places, holy souls holy places. David professes so, *Psal. lxxxiv. 3*. Nay the very Sparrows he observes will build as near the Altars as they can; and it may be for that kind of sensible and natural piety, they particularly, above other creatures are said by Christ not to fall, one of them, to the ground, without Gods more peculiar providence.

I shall make no further note upon this particular, it is but implicitly implied, though yet so necessarily in the Text: They brought him in, in whither? Into the *Temple* it was: and the very words immediately before, in that very verse, express it. Yet being but so express'd, so briefly and implicitly, I take leave to be brief too, because there is still so much of the *Text*, and so little of the time behind. And the point next behind is the manner and form of Christs presentation, or the cause, or reason why he was presented, why they brought him in; *to do for him after the custom of the Law*. And three points of it there were to be observed upon such occasions to offer him, to ransom him, to offer for him.

He was the *first-born*, and therefore to be offered, and presented. The first-born was Gods, *all the first-born are mine*, says he, *Numb. viii. 17*. both of man and beast. And Christ, he is *the first-born of every creature*, says St. Paul, *Col. i. 15*. So in him they are offered all together, man and beast, all sanctified by him: men that live like men, and men that live like beasts, *Qui computruerunt sicut jumenta in stercore suo*, who wallow in their own dung, in their own sins, like the beasts that perish: for the righteous and for the sinner both is he offered, that both might have access to God through him. That (2.) man and beast too, according to the letter might, as the *Psalmist* says, be saved, that is, blest and preserved through him.

He was the *first-born* (2.) of his Father, the first and only begotten Son of God, so to be presented upon that title.

He was (3.) the *first-born* of his Mother, the first and only Son, first born, though not begotten there: but first-born was sufficient to entitle him to God.

The *Apostle* calls him (4.) *The first-born among many brethren*, *Rom. viii. 29*. He our elder, and we the younger brethren.

The same *Apostle* (5.) calls him the *first-born of the dead*, *Col. i. 18*. So that now being the *first-born* both by Father and Mother, both in Heaven and Earth, of quick and dead, of every creature; no great wonder to hear of his presenting to the Lord.

Yet for himself neither was he offered, but for us; he needed no such sanctifying, but for us, to sanctifie us, as the first-fruits to sanctifie the whole lump; as the true *Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world*; as the first-born in relation to his brethren to rule over us as a Prince, and offer for us, and bless us as a Priest; the two appendices of a *primogeniture*.

Thus

Thus is he made to us our *morning Sacrifice*, as he was after our *evening offering*, when he was offered upon the *Cross*. Thus both offered for himself *after the custom of the Law*, and for us in the interpretation of the *Gospel*.

But the *custom of the Law* was next to ransom him; *five shekels* was his price, the ordinary rate, *Numb. xviii. 16.* a goodly price for the first-born of God to be valued at! *O blessed Jesus*, how little hast thou made thy self for us? of how little value? How can we sufficiently value thee, for thy thus undervaluing thy self? And why should we now (my beloved) so overvalue our selves, as to think no honour sufficient for us, nothing too good for us, no riches enough, no respect answerable to our deserts? If Christ be valued but at *five shekels*, the best of us, all of us, the whole world of us, ; and if there were a world of worlds were not all worth *five farthings*. Let us but think of this, and no disrespect, or disesteem, or slighting from the very meanest and unworthiest hand will ever trouble us again, certainly.

Well, ransom'd he was, yet, with it, as little as it was, but it seems it was but to pay a greater, the price of his life to ransom us. No ransom would redeem him the second time, because his business was not to redeem himself, but us. He was redeemed now for a little, but he was sold for less than *thirty pence*; and yet would not be redeemed by any sum. He made himself of no estimation again and again, and dealt with himself as if he were not worth a ransom only, that he might ransom us, and set us high in God's esteem.

The ransom money here was the *Priests*: And holy *Mary*, as poor as she was, would pay her dues. And *Jesus* would she should, his Mother should; and then sure all his brethren too, would be therefore offered and redeemed. 'Tis a good example for Church duties, when such pay them; and may amount to a kind of precept: for if he who is the *great High-priest* himself, and from whom it was not due, pay as he did tribute afterward, that he might not offend. I can see little of Christ where the Church or Priest is robb'd, or little Christianity where such offences are not heeded.

Christ would break no Law, for *he came to fulfil it*; nor Custom, for you see he observes it, did so all his life, kept the Feasts, kept the Customs. He follows not Christ that does other, who e're he follows.

Nay, Christ himself commutes too, breaks not the custom of commutation: One of the most questionable points of custom is commutation, to exchange one for another, to pay with the purse instead of the person. Yet such was law and Custom, and Christ disputes it not; nor is reason against it, to change one thing for another, when both are good; one vow into another, one penance into another; where reason, not covetousness, respect to the condition, or inability of persons, not partiality make the exchange. In such cases we are to submit, not dispute, or cry out as some do; if for money, why not without it? If God will not accept my person, why my money? If I may have or do it for the payment of a little sum, why is it not lawful to me without it? 'Tis answerable enough to reasonable men, or devout Christians; so God, so Law, so Custom will have it, and it is no sin to do it.

There is yet one thing more to be done *after the custom of the Law*, an offering to be offered, a lamb, and a Turtle Dove, or young Pigeon for the rich, or two Turtles, or two young Pigeons for the poorer sort, *Lev. xii. 6, 8.* And it was so done here. 'Tis thought by them that dare determine

which, that it was the latter, the pigeons, as cheaper and easier to be gotten, where there was so much poverty as this child was born to.

Be it which it will, it was the poors offering that from henceforth poverty might look chearful to the *Christian*, that was so horrid to the *Jew*, become his happiness which was the others great affliction, the poor womans offering that it might sanctifie poverty to the poor, and offer it henceforward as an acceptable service unto God.

That (2.) the Christian might hence know what to offer *gemitus turturum & columbarum*, a sorrowful and contrite heart, bewail themselves like Turtles that have lost their mates, and mourn sore like Doves; offer up chaste and harmless souls, the chastity of the Turtle, and the innocence of the Dove.

That (3.) we might no more hereafter censure poverty, even when it falls to the great mans share, seeing Blessed *Mary* and *Joseph* of the *seed Royal*, both, are become so poor, that they can offer no more than this; nay, though they should have no more to offer than their own sighs and moanings.

That (4.) we might learn now, that God will accept even the least and poorest presents, two Turtles, two Pigeons, two Mites, where there is no more with convenience to be spar'd. Yet somewhat he will have offered, be it never so little, that all might acknowledge his right, none at all excepted.

Thus this offering concerns us, but how it concerns the *Child Jesus* is to be enquired. The one Turtle could not possibly, the sin-offering to be sure; but the other might: It was a burnt-offering that, a kind of thanksgiving only for his safe birth, as well as for his Mothers safe deliverance. It was to have been a Lamb, could the womans poverty have reach'd it, though the sin-offering for no woman, at her purification, had been above a Turtle: it may be to tell 'um that they are to give thanks both for themselves and their Child; great thanks, more than double, though they offer but little, and single, for their own natural imperfections; a Lamb for them both, though but a Turtle for themselves: The Childs original guilt to be purged with another kind of sacrifice, better sacrifices than those. Yet, besides, he taking on him our persons, the sin-offering might also so far concern him as he concerned us.

And if so, the greater sure is our obligation to him, that he would not only take on him *the form of a servant*, but go also under the fashion of a sinner: that he would be brought into so dishonourable appearance, to be thus done for *after the custom of the Law*; not only offered himself, but himself offered for, as if he needed an offering to cleanse him. But so it was not, for *that* it was not; that he thus submitted to the Law of offerings, but for these ensuing reasons: and so we consider the reason of the doing.

1. To avoid scandal, not to offend the *Jews*, to teach us to be very scrupulous how we offend our brother, that we use neither our own right, nor our Christian liberty with offence.

2. To teach obedience, not to dispute commands, nor plead priviledges too much against Laws and Customs.

3. To be a pattern of humility, not to exalt or cry up our selves, or think much to be accounted like other men.

4. To shew his approbation of the Law, and that however he might seem, yet indeed he did not come to *destroy the Law*, but to *fulfil it*.

5. That he might thus receive the testimony of *Simeon* and *Anna*, and be

be made manifest from his very beginning, who he was, that he might appear to the world what before he did only to the *wise men* and the *Shepherds*, to be a light to the *Gentiles*, and the glory of his people *Israel*, and to be this day so proclaimed by the spirit of Prophecie in both the *Sexes*.

6. He was done for according to the Law, that he might redeem us from the bondage of the Law, offered as the first-born, as a son of man, that he might thereby make us the children of God.

7. He that needed no offering for himself, was thus offered, that we might with holy *Job* suspect the best, and perfectest of our works; and though we be never so righteous, not answer, nor know, but despise our selves, and make supplication to our judge, *Job ix. 15, 21, 28*.

Lastly, He was thus presented to God, that so he might be embraced by man, that *Simeon*, not for himself only, but for us, might take seisin of him, and we be thus put in possession of a Saviour. For so it follows, as on purpose, *Then took he him up in his arms and blessed God*.

We have done with *Christs offering*. Come we now to our receiving: his *Parents* presented him to God, *Simeon* received him for us. And these the particulars of the receiving, *Suscipiens, suscipiendi modus, susceptionis Tempus, & suscipientis benedictio*. The Receiver, *Simeon*, he, (2.) The manner of taking or receiving him, *took him up in his arms*. (3.) The time then, *when he was brought into the Temple*. (4.) The thanksgiving for it, and *blessed God*.

But our receiving takes me from *Simeons*, I must defer his till anon, till after ours: only I shall glance at it as I speak of ours. For which I would to God we were all as well prepared as he for his.

The same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of *Israel*, and the Holy Ghost was upon him, ver. 25. I would I could say so of us here, this day, *Sed nunquid hos tantum salvabis Domine*, says holy Bernard, wilt thou, O Lord, save only such; and answers it out of the Psalm, *Fumenta & homines salvabis Domine. Thou Lord shalt save both man and beast*. Us poor beasts too, wandering sheep at best, but too often, as unreasonable, as sensual, as groveling downward as any beast, dirty and filthy as Sows, churlish as Dogs, fierce as Lions, lustful as Goats, cruel as Tygers, ravenous as Bears. Accomplish we but the days of our purification, purifie we our hearts by Faith and Repentance, bring we this *gemitus columba*, sorrow for our sins, though we cannot this *simplicitatem columba*, innocence and purity, the mourning of the Turtle, though we cannot the innocence of the Dove, and notwithstanding all shall be well.

'Tis *Candlemas* to day, so called from the lighting up of Candles, offering them, consecrating them, and bearing them in procession; a custom from the time of *Justinian the Emperour*, at the latest about 1100. years ago; or as others say, *Pope Gelastus, Anno 496*. or thereabouts, to shew that long expected light of the *Gentiles* was now come, was now sprung up, and shined brighter than the Sun at noon, and might be taken in our hands: let the Ceremony pass, reserve the substance, light up the two Candles of Faith and good Works, light them with the fire of Charity: bear we them burning in our hands, as Christ commands us; meet we him *with our lamps burning*; consecrate we also them, all our works and actions with our prayers; offer we them then upon the Altars of the Lord of Hosts, to his honour and glory, and go we to the Altars of the God of our salvation, *bini & bini*, as St. Bernard speaks, as in procession, two and two, in peace and unity together; and with this solemnity and preparation we poor oxen and asses may come and

and approach to our Masters Crib. The Crib is the outward elements, wherein he lies wrapt up. They are the Swadling-cloths and Mantles with which his body is covered when he is now offered up to God, and taken up by us. Take them, and take him: the candle of Faith will there shew you him, and the candle of Charity will light him down into your arms, that you may embrace him. We embrace where we love, we take into our arms whom we love; so that love *Jesus* and embrace *Jesus*; love *Jesus* and take *Jesus*; love *Jesus* and take him into our hands, and into our arms, and into our mouths, and into our hearts.

Take him and offer him again, take him up, and offer him up for our sanctification and redemption, to redeem us from all our sins, and sanctify all our righteousnesses; for without him nothing is righteous, nothing is holy.

This *day* was his offering day, is to be ours. Offer we then him, offer we our selves; take we him up into our arms, into our hands and hearts; having first lighted a candle, and swept our houses to receive and entertain him: and having humbly, and chearfully, and devoutly, and thankfully received him, bless we God.

God be gracious unto us, and purifie our hearts and hands, that we may worthily receive him; strengthen our arms that we may hold him, open our mouths that we may bless him for him; accept our offering, and Christs offering for us, his perfect sacrifice, for our imperfect offerings; that we may receive all the benefits of this great sacrifice, the remission of our sins, the cleansing of our souls, the refreshing of our bodies, the fulness of all graces, the protection of our souls and bodies in this Kingdom of Grace, and the saving them in the Kingdom of Glory: that as we this *day* bless him here, so we may bless, and praise, and glorifie him hereafter for evermore.

THE SECOND SERMON

On the Day of the
PURIFICATION
OF THE
Blessed Virgin.

St. LUKE ii. 28.

Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God.



And we have also this *Day* taken him, and are now return'd again to bless God. Taken him we have in our hands, in our mouths, *Et dulcedine replentur viscera,* and our bowels are filled with his sweetness, filled as the Moon at the Full, and we cannot hold our peace; we must needs give thanks after this holy Supper for so royal a Feast.

Indeed, were the business either of the day, or the taking or receiving done as soon as we had taken him up in our arms, or down into our bowels, *Simeon* might have spared his blessing, and both you and I all further labour: But receiving so glorious great things at the hands of God, we cannot for shame but return him somewhat, a Thanksgiving Sermon, or an *Anthem*; and being in the strength of this meat to walk not only forty days before we thus eat again of this kind of bread, or drink of this rock, but forty years; perhaps some of us, and all of us all our lives in the power and strength of this food, in the vertue of this grace this *day* afforded us, by the efficacy of the offering this *day* offered for us, we cannot after it be such unclean beasts but that we'll chew the cud, the meat that this *day* we have taken, and relish our mouths again with the taste and savour of this days food; refresh our souls and selves with a thankful remembrance of this days mercy, and offer our Evening Sacrifice of thanksgiving as we have already done our morning.

So that it will not be amiss to take Christ again into our arms, though but to look upon him, and see what we have taken, what we have done; that

that if we have taken him somewhat untowardly, as people that are not used to handle children seldom but do; as people that are not enough acquainted with *the Child Jesus*, as many do him, as the best handlers of him amongst us cannot altogether excuse our selves from much imperfection in the doing, we may by a review amend what is amiss, and what is past in much weakness in the time of receiving, or before it in the preparation towards it, may be corrected for the future by a continued taking him into our arms in a holy life and conversation.

For many ways there are of taking him, and that is one which above all is not to be forgotten, as without which all other taking him, is to no purpose but to play with him, or to mock him. But I must first remember where I left, and come to that in order as I go.

Four Particulars I pointed at in the words, four parts of this second General of *Christs Reception*, or *Simeons gratulatory Acceptation* of him. *Suscipiens, suscipiendi modus, susceptionis Tempus, & suscipientis benedictio.*

The Taker or Receiver, *Simeon, He.*

The manner of taking or receiving him, *Took him up in his arms.*

The time of this taking, *Then*, when he was brought into the Temple, and presented there.

The Takers or Receivers Gratulation, or Thanksgiving for it, and blessed God. *Then took he, &c.*

The Taker or Receiver of Christ, *He* comes first to be taken notice of, and *Simeon* was *He*. The common and most received opinion of him is, that he was a *Priest*. For the *Priests Office* it was to receive the Offerings of the Lord; and behold here, *He* it is that takes him into his arms, and receives him at the hands of his Parents, as *Eli* did *Samuel* of *Elkanah* and *Anna*, 1 Sam. i. 25. And (2.) their Office it was to bless the people, *Aarons* and his Sons, Num. vi. 23. and that does *Simeon*, ver. 34. Takes the Child, and blesses the Parents, *He*: But the *Christian Priests* does more, blesses the Child too. No *Priest* of the *Law* could do that. 'Tis the Minister of the *Gospel* only that can do that, that has that Authority, to consecrate, and bless, and take, and all. *He* it is that blesses the dead Elements, and quickens them into holy things by the ministration of his Office, by the vertue of his Function. Till he blesses, they are but common bread and wine; when he has taken and offered them, then they are holy; then they are the means, and pledges, and seals of grace; then they convey Christ unto the faithful Receivers soul. This is the mystery of the Gospel, and so I speak it, not literally of Christs Person, but mystically of his body and blood, as offered and taken in the Sacrament.

But after the blessing, the taking concerns us all; and though perhaps it concerns us not, whether *Simeon* was a *Priest* or not; yet it both concerns us, that he that blesses and offers be a *Priest*, as much as it concerns us, that it be the Sacrament we would have, which cannot be offered but by the hands to which Christ committed that power and authority; and (2.) that we our selves that take be some way qualified in the same respects as old *Simeon* here, of whom we may be certain of his Sanctity whatever of his Priesthood.

The holy Spirit bears witness to him, that *He* was a just man, *Siquis*, ver. 25. just and upright in his dealing, in the righteousness which is by the Law unblameable, as St. Paul of himself; yet has even such a one need of Christ, is not fully and compleatly righteous till he take Christ into his arms by faith, till he add the righteousness which is by faith. Yet is that

that other so good a disposition to this, that (whatever some men, to excuse their own laziness, or looseness, and the devil to encourage it, have ungodlily vented to the World, that the moral, righteous, honest man is further off from Christ than the most dissolute and debauched sinner yet) we see the first that takes hold on Christ is said to be a just, that is a moral honest man, who does all right and justice, no wrong or injury to his neighbour; and whoever he is that Christ suffers to take him into his arms, has already cleansed his hands by some works of Repentance, and at least, stedfast resolution to be what is said of *Simeon, homo justus*; to be righteous and just without such purposes at least, no taking him to be sure.

He is (2.) stil'd *εὐλαβὴς*, devout and pious, *homo timoratus*, the *Latine* renders it, a man timorous to offend God, and reverently respecting holy things. And with such affections, devotion, and reverence, and fear, and trembling are we to approach the Table of the Lord; to receive and take him; we shall else take nothing but the rags he is wrapt in, himself will vanish out of our hands.

He (3.) was that He that waited for the consolation of *Israel*. And none but such a He, one that waits, and looks, and longs, and thirsts, and hungers after Christ, the consolation of *Israel*, and all the *Isles* of the *Gentiles* too, none but he shall have the honour and happiness of Christs Embraces; to them only that look for him will he appear either in grace or glory.

Upon him (4.) was the Holy Ghost, and he only who is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, whose soul is so, whose body is so, shall truly and really touch the Child Jesus. He will not dwell or come into those arms which the Holy Ghost has not made holy. Holy things must not be cast to dogs, to the unclean and impure, nor be laid up in unclean places; nor indeed can any receive him, or so much as call him by his name, but by the Holy Ghost, how fain soever he would call or come.

This Point would have done well to have been considered before your receiving, and I hope you did; but it is seasonable too now, that if you have purified your selves before, approach't in righteousness with devotion reverence, with hungering and thirsting, believing and hoping for him, and in the power of the Holy Ghost, you may so continue: if you have been deficient in any, you may re-enforce your selves, ask pardon, and set your selves the more strictly to righteousness, and devotion, good desires, and holy practises hereafter.

As there is none too young to be brought to him, so there is none too old to come and take him. Old *Simeon*, now ready to depart the World, has yet strength enough to hold this Child in his aged arms; him that by being held upholds him and all the World; none too old for Christs company. Though he be here a Child, he is the *Ancient of days* elsewhere. There's no pretending age against his service. In the old Law the *Priests* at fifty were exempted from the service of the *Tabernacle*, the *Mosaical* service of the *Law*: but nor fifty, nor sixty, nor a hundred, nor any years can excuse us from the service of the *Gospel*, Christs service, nor debarr us from it. To that, the outward strength and vigour of the body was necessary: To Christ, the inward vivacity and action of of the soul will suffice where the body can do little. And as there is no time too long for Christs Service, not from our first childhood to our second; so there is none too late, if but strength to reach out a hand, and take that which is no burthen, but an ease to bear the greatest ease of the sick, or

weary, or aged soul. This is a Point may comfort us when all worldly comforts are past us; When, like old *Barzillai*, we have neither pleasure nor taste in our meat or drink, we may find sweetness in Christs body and blood. When the Grasshopper is a burden, this Child is none; when the *keepers of the house tremble*, our hands may yet hold him full fast; when they that *look out of the windows be darkned* we may stedfastly behold him; when the *grinders cease* we may yet eat this bread of life; he that *riseth at the voice of the bird* may sleep soundly with this Child in his arms; when *all desire shall fail*, this desire of the Nations will not leave him; when he is *going to his long home*, this Child will both accompany and conduct him to his rest.

O the comfort of this Child in our old age, when we are ready to go out of the World, ready to depart; no comfort like it; no warmth like that which reflects from the flesh of this young Child, his being flesh, made and offered to us, and taken by us. When no *Abisbag* can warm us, this *Shunamite* can. When none can cherish us, he can *stay us with flaggons*, and *comfort us with Apples*, Cant. ii. 5. when no earthly fire in our bosoms can give us heat, with this Child in our arms we grow young again, and renew our years unto eternity. O comfortable and happy old age that has his arms furnished with the *Child Jesus*. *Forsake me not, O Lord, in mine old age*, nor draw thy self out of mine arms *when I am gray-headed*, and I shall seek no other love, no other embraces.

Thus have I shewed you *Simeons* silver head, and golden hands; *Simeon* with *Jesus in his arms*, an old man holding of a Child, a Priest embracing of his King, a servant entertaining of his Lord, the *First Adam* laying hold upon the *Second*, the *Law* catching at the *Gospel*, the Old World courting of the New, Age and Youth, State and Religion, Humility and Greatness, Weakness and Strength, Rigour and Mercy, Time and Eternity embracing. 'Tis a happy day that makes this union, where the imperfection of the one is helpt out and perfected by the perfections of the other. And 'tis the happier, in that now in the next place it directs us how to bear a part in this union, and communicate in this happiness, *Et ipse accepit eum in ulnas*, by taking him into our arms from whom comes all this *peace upon earth*, and *good will among men*.

Several are the ways of taking Christ. We take him in at our ears, when we hear him in his Word. We take him in our mouths, when we confess him. We take him into our hearts, when we desire and love him. We take him upon our necks, when we submit to his obedience. We take him upon our knees, when we pray unto him. We take him into our heads, when we meditate and think upon him. 'Tis good taking him any of these ways, nay, all he must be taken.

But our business at this time is, in our arms or hands to do it, and so to take him is,

First, To believe and hope in him. Faith and Hope are the two arms of the soul, whereby we take and entertain whatsoever it is we love. And here *Simeon* did so: he would not so have waited for the consolation of *Israel* had he not fully believed and hoped strongly to attain it; nor would he have either so have stretcht out his hands to bless the Parents, nor his arms to receive the Child, nor his voice to sing so loud salvation to the ends of the World, that *Jew* and *Gentile* both might hear it.

2. To take him in our hands and arms is to receive him in the Sacraments. Those are the two arms that the Church opens to take him.

Baptism

Baptism, as the left hand, the weaker, for young weaklings; and the *Eucharist*, as the right and stronger, for those of riper and stronger years; and in these arms he lies at all times to be found, with them he is taken; and when at any time we duly and devoutly use them we take him by them. And by the one of them we have I hope all of us this day taken him.

3. But there is yet a way, and arms every day to take him with. Good works are the hands, and the two branches of Charity; Divine Charity, and Brotherly love, that divide the two Tables of the Law betwixt them; are the two arms that embrace him: The good works that proceed from the first are the hands of the one, and they that issue from the second are the other. And I may have leave to call the Ten Commandments the ten fingers that make the hands that receive him. Only here's one thing to be observed, and worth it too, that these hands and fingers, the duties of the Moral Law, are to take Christ to them, his merits to supply their defects, his strength to actuate their weakness, his faith to raise their flagging dulness and earthy heaviness, which till then looks not high enough beyond worldly interests, ere they can reach heaven.

But by these hands thus ordered, purified, and lifted up, no fear of taking Christ wholly, with his greatest benefits and utmost relations. You need not fear the hands, or doubt the vertue of them that are thus first enabled by Christ, but that they are the truest power we hold him by. Let but our goodness die, our righteousness fail, our good deeds vanish out of sight, and Christ does too; he that is the eternal Wisdom will not dwell in a body that is subject unto sin, that is the vassal of Satan under the dominion or habit of any iniquity.

By these hands therefore you are daily to embrace him. These are the hands that keep him too, that hold him fast. So long as our good Works, so long continues he; so long as our Sanctification, so long our Justification; if the one goes, the other does not stay; no, is not remembered, says God. God himself forgets it, as if it had not been, when once the righteous turns from his righteousness and turns wicked. This day (my beloved) you have taken Christ by the hand of the holy Sacrament. That was your morning service; Take him now henceforward by continuance in well-doing, by loving God, by loving your neighbour, those two arms of Charity, and by all the fingers, and joynts, and nerves of good works, all sorts of good works, that you never more be deprived of him.

And yet *suscipere* is somewhat more. *Sub capere*, & *sursum capere*, or in the English, to take him up. Take up his cross and follow him. Put your neck under even his hardest yoke if he point it out. That's *Capere sub* & *super* too, to take on and up, to deny your selves, and submit to any affliction, any cross, any persecution, any loss of liberty, or limb, or life, or goods, or friends, or any thing, rather than part with Jesus, than part our arms to let him go, than any way part with our part, any part or portion in him.

And then lastly, *Sursum capere*; Take him up and offer him again unto his Father: Offer him as our Lamb for a burnt-offering; offer him as our Turtle for a sin-offering, for he is our Turtle, of whom it is said, *the voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land*, Cant. ii. 10. offer him as our Dove for a Sacrifice of thanksgiving, for he is our love and Dove, Cant. ii. 13, 14. Offer him for our meat-offering, for he is our meat, *the very bread that*

came down from heaven, fittest therefore of all bread to be offered to heaven again.

Offer we him as our *Turtur* in our solitude and retirement; *Turtur avis solitaria*, the Turtle is a solitary bird. Offer him as our Dove, in company, and in our Congregations. *Columba avis gregaria*, Doves fly by flocks together. Offer him in our contemplation, and offer him in our practical conversation.

And offer we up our selves together with him, for it is an offering day, and we must not stand out, nor come in empty; offer up, I say, our selves as Turtles and Doves; some, their single estate with the Turtle; others, their married with the Dove. Offer we up the Turtles sighs instead of wanton Songs: The Turtles chastity and purity, and the Doves simplicity. Let our lives be full of sorrow for our sins, and compassions to our brother, full of purity and innocency. Keep we still this *sursum in suscipere*, upon the tops of the Mountains, with the Turtle, as near heaven as can be. Set no more our foot upon the green trees, or boughs (as the Turtle does not when his Mate is dead) rest we no more upon the green and flourishing, the light and leavy pleasures of the World, but spend the residue of this mournful life in bewailing the widowed Church, our lost both Spouse and Mother, our deceased Husband and Father to. Thus taking Christ and his Offering, and proportioning ours according to it, our heaviness may again be turned into joy, a joyful light spring up again, our Purification become also a *Candlemas*, an illustrious day of lights and glories.

'Tis *Candlemas day* I tell you again. Let it be so henceforward with you for ever, perpetual *Candlemas*, perpetual *Christmas*; your good works perpetually shine before men, that they also may glorify your Father by that light, and nothing be henceforth heard of but Christ, in your hands, and arms, and mouths, all your words, and works, and lives, and deaths, nothing but Christ, nothing but Christ; as if you were wholly full this day, as *Simeons* arms, with the *Child Jesus*, with the *Lords Christ*.

This work is never unseasonable. Christ may at all times be taken so with reverence, into our mouths, or arms, or hearts, or any part about us. Yet he has a proper time besides, and that is when he is presented in the Temple after his *Circumcision*, and his mothers *Purification*.

At such a time as that, when our hearts are purified by repentance and faith; when the devout soul, which like his Mother, conceives and brings him forth, has accomplished the days of her Purification, and offered the forementioned offerings of the Turtle and the Dove, and we circumcised with the Circumcision of the Spirit, all our excrescent inclinations, exorbitant affections, and superfluous desires cut off, we may with confidence take him into our arms: But till then 'tis too much sauciness to come so near him, at least presumption to conceive we have him truly in our arms, that he is truly embraced by us, whilst we have other loves, other affections, which cannot abide with him, already in our arms, and too ready in our hands.

Prophane we him not therefore with unhallowed hands, nor touch this holy Ark of the Covenant with irreverent fingers, lest we die. Many that have done so, says the *Apostle*, for so doing are sick and weak upon it, and many sleep, that is, die suddenly in their sins, whilst the hallowed meat is yet in their mouths. 'Tis as dangerous as death and damnation too to take

Christ

Christ with unputified and unprepared hearts or hands. Take him not then till you are prepared.

Yet (2.) if prepared, take him when you can, and as soon as you can, when he is offered to you, whilst you may. To day if you will; 'tis offering day with him yet any day too when he is offered, and whilst he is so, for he always will not be so, 'twill not be always *Candlemas*, he will not be offered every day. There is a time when he will go and not return, when he will not any longer strive with flesh, when we shall stretch out our hands and he will not come, nor hear, nor see us neither. To day, if you will do it, do it; you are not sure of your selves to morrow, much less of him. To day, if you will, if not, I know not what day to pitch, nor will you find it easie to meet another if you at any time neglect the present. This day, then, whilst it is called to day, lay hold of him if you be wise, and would not be put off by him with a *Discedite*, hands off, I have nothing to do with you, nor you with me, it is too late.

Many are the times and days, as well as means and ways, wherein Christ is offered to us; but this day he has been thrust into our arms, put into our hands, and we have taken him. Yet, say I still, take him up in your arms, and I say it without either *tautology*, or impertinence, or impropriety. Into our hands we have taken him, and I hope into our arms, into our bosoms, into our hearts besides; take him yet up higher and higher into our affections, the very natural arms of our souls, more and more into them, nearer and nearer to us, closer and closer to our hearts; embrace and hug him close, as we those we most affectionately love, and hold him fast, that he may no more depart from us, but delight to be with us as with those that so love him that they cannot live without him.

Thus 'tis no impertinence to wish you to take him still, though you have taken him. Thus you are every day to take him, or this days taking him will come to nothing, or to worse. If you go not on, still taking him nearer and nearer, deeper and deeper every day into your bosoms and hearts, as you have this day into your hands and mouths, you will be questioned in indignation by him; Why have you taken me into your mouths? Why have you taken me up in your hands, seeing you now seem to hate me, are so soon grown weary of me, and put me from you, and even cast me behind you? Take heed, I beseech you, of doing thus, of drawing back your hands so soon, drawing back at all. For after this favour, whereby you have been made partakers of him, whereby he has so infinitely condescended from himself, as to be received into so unclean, and filthy, and extremely unworthy hands and souls, to be embraced by such vile Creatures, what can we render him sufficient for such goodness? 'Tis but this, O man, that he requires, a poor thing, O man, that he requires at thy hand for this vast infinite favour, and thou hast *Simeon* here doing it before thee, blessing God. And he took him up in his arms and blessed God.

Indeed, we can do little if we cannot bless, bless him that blesses us; *benedicere*, speak well of him; say he is good and gracious, loving and merciful unto us; tell and speak forth his praise, tell and declare the great and gracious things that he hath done for us, the wonderful things that he this day did for the Children of men; Came and took their place, and was presented and accepted for them, who were but refuse and rejected persons, were fain to send Bulls, and Lambs, and Rams, the very beasts, to plead for them; glad of any thing to stand
between

between them and their offended God, even the heifers dung, and ashes, to make atonement for them; and as it were, her skin to cover them, *Numb. xix. 2.* till this day, when this holy Child was presented for all; and all those former poor shifts and shelters at an end: no need of those dead offerings more, being fully reconciled by this living one for ever. Bless we him, and praise him, and speak good of him for this.

Bless we him yet more, for vouchsafing us the touches of his sacred Body, for so kindly coming into our arms; our own children do not sometimes do so, but come often with much frowardness and crying, reluctance and unwillingness. This *Child Jesus* comes of his own accord, slips down from Heaven into our laps when we are not aware, is in our arms ere we can stir them up. And that this Son of God should so willingly leave his Fathers bosom, the true and only seat of joy, and pleasure, for ours, the perfect seat of sorrow and misery; and rest himself in our weak arms, who have nor rest nor shelter, but in his: that he should thus really infinitely bless us, and yet require no greater a return, than our imperfect blessing him again: How can we keep our lips shut, our tongues silent of his praise.

But having this day seal'd all these favours and blessings to us, by the holy Sacrament, the pledge and seal of this love wherewith he loved us; having so really, and fully, and manifestly, and fast, given himself into our arms, we cannot sure but bless him both with our tongues and hands; with holy *Simeon* make an *Hymn* of his goodness, an *Anthem* of his love, a *Psalm* of his mercy, and in sweet numbers carol forth his praise: set our heads to do it, our hearts to endite it, our pens to write it, our voices to sing it, and with the *three Children* in their Song, invite all the creatures in Heaven and Earth, Angels, and men, all the sensible and insensible creatures to bear us company; so to make a full noise of all kinds of Musick, to set forth his praise. Do it with our hands too, do that which will exalt his praise. Then 'tis *benedixit* complete, when it has *benefecit* next it. We speak best when we do best, when our lives and actions speak it, *Benedixit & bene vixit*, are not so near of sound for nothing. A holy life is not more truly Gods blessing to man, than again it is mans chiefest and most acceptable blessing God.

Many ways may this blessing God be performed by us, but as we stand now with some relation to this days blessing; the blessed *Eucharist*, the feast of blessing, *the cup of blessing*, as the *Apostle* stiles it. I shall shew you now you have taken it, what blessing is more peculiarly required after it.

Three acts of blessing there are to be performed after this act of so taking Christ into our arms; and for it three points of blessing for this great blessing of the Holy Communion, *Thanksgiving*, *Oblation*, and *Petition*. Bless him and give thanks to him. Bless him and offer up his Son to him again, and our selves with him; offer his Son in our own arms, him and our selves. Bless him and present our petitions to him, our prayers as well as praises. Or in the language of the *Text*, *Benedicamus*. Speak well of him, do somewhat for him, and bring our requests and petitions to him. You see I need not run out of the *Text* for any kind of blessing.

First then, Bless him with your tongues, *Speak good of his Name*, and let your lips speak forth his *glory* and *wonderous works*; tell the world what he has done for you, what great and mighty things, *Salutem ejus evangelizate*, *Psal. xcvi. 4.* Tell it out for good tidings, the tidings of great joy. Be always speaking, always telling it.

Call

Call to all the creatures to bear you company, every thing to rejoyce with you. Tell your happiness to the Woods and Mountains, in your solitary retirements; tell it to the *Towns* and *Villages*, speak of it in all companies; tell it to the young Men and Maids, old Men and Children, all Sexes and Ages, what God has done for your souls. Tell it to the *Summer* and *Winter*, both in your prosperity and adversity: let nothing make you forget your thanks. Tell it to the *Frost* and *Fire*, in your coldnesses and in your fervencies and zeals; to the *Earth*, and to the *Waters*; in your drinesses of soul, and in the sorrows of your hearts: praise him in all conditions. Tell it to the *Angels*, and *Heavens*, as you are about your heavenly business. Tell it to the Fowls of the Air, even in the midst of your airy thoughts, and projects, that they may be such as may set forth his glory. Tell it to the *Priests* and Servants of the Lord, to solemnize your thanksgiving. Tell it to the *Spirits* and *Souls* of the righteous, to bear a part with you in your Song; and intreat them all, all estates and orders, all conditions and things, to bring in each their blessing, to make up *one* great and worthy blessing for this days blessing, to rejoyce and sing, exult and triumph with you for this happy *arm-full* of eternal blessings this day bestowed upon you. Begin we the blessing: blessing, and honour, and power, and glory, and thanks, and praise, and worship, and great glory be unto God, for ever and ever, and let all the creatures say, *Amen*.

Bless we him secondly with our *Offerings*. Hold we up first our hands, and bless him; hold we up our hands and vow, and resolve to serve him from henceforth with hand and heart, and all our members; offer him our vows and resolutions, holy ones; strengthen our hands, and renew our purposes to serve him now henceforward with a *high* hand; *maugre* all the pleasures and profits of the world, say what they will against it, with a *strong* hand; do they what they dare or can against us. Bless him and resolve to bless him for ever; and every day renew we still our resolutions, that our hands *may* be so strengthened by them, that none may be able to take him out of our hands.

2. *Catch* we fast hold of him with our hands, when we bless him; clasp him fast by a *lively* hope, as assured that all our hope is in him, all our hope in holding him, clasp we him fast and bless him.

3. *Spread* your arms, and bless him with your *Faith*. Open your souls, and every day more and more let him come in: let it be your continual exercise more and more to trust him, to rely upon him.

4. *Open* your hands, and cast down your blessings upon the poor: He that blesses the *poor*, blesses *God*. What you have done to them, says *Christ*, you did to *me*, St. *Matth.* xxv. *Open* your hands, and bless *God*.

5. *Cross* your hands, and beat your breasts: Bless him with your hands a cross, as humbly acknowledging your vileness and unworthiness of so great a favour as his presence; as the seeing, and touching, and handling, and tasting him. He truly blesses *God* on high, that thus makes himself low.

6. *Fill* your hands and bless him; bless him with a full hand, both your hands full of blessings; blessings of all sorts, all good works and virtues. An *universal* obedience is the onliest blessing *God*: *Simeon* being interpreted is *obedient*; and he it is that here blesses, the obedient soul that at any time only truly blesses *God*.

7. *Wash* we yet our hands before we either open or spread, or hold up, or cross, or clasp, or fill them: *wash* we before we bless, wash away our impurities with our tears, bewail and bemoan our defects, and weaknesses,

ses, and imperfections, which in our receiving have been too many ; that by this hand our oblation and blessing may be offered with pure and unspotted hands and hearts.

8. *Clap* we then our hands and bless him ; do it with *joy* and not with grief : we may do it well when we have so washed them first. Let it be our way of blessing to do it cheerfully, to settle our selves to all the works of piety and obedience, of faith, and hope, and charity, and humility : and in a word, to an universal righteousness, with all the purity we can, with all the strength and resolution we are able. Bless with a cheerful and ready hand, set our selves ever hereafter merrily to this work.

But remember we all this while we so use our hands to bless, that we so open and shut, so spread and cross them, that we let not *Christ* go out the while. Offer we up our selves and him together : Resolve we, whoever shall take *him*, shall take *us* too. We will not part, no not in death ; we will live, and die, and sleep, and rise again together : He that will have him shall have us, whether he will or no : He is in our arms, *there* we will keep him. Yet in lieu of parting with him we will part with our selves, and offer our selves for him if that will do it, *yes*, and that will do it. *Duo minuta habeo Domine corpus & animam* ; says the devout *Father*. I have two mites, O Lord, I have two mites to offer ; to give thee for thy Son, to offer thee for him ; my *soul* and my *body*. Them thou shalt have willingly : I am content to part with *them*, so I may keep *him*, and *they* will content him. Offer them up then a living, reasonable sacrifice, for it will be an acceptable service too, an acceptable blessing of him.

Yet as we offer up our selves, we must now lastly offer up *Christ* too. He gave him to us, to be an offering for us ; to sanctifie all our offerings, for a blessing to us, to bless all our blessings. And for the imperfection of all our righteousness, offerings and sacrifices, prayers, and praises, and blessings to make them accepted, which in themselves, and their weak performances noway deserve, he was given us to offer. His perfection will make amends for our imperfections, his purity for our impurities, his strength for our weakness ; and for them, when we have done all we can to be accepted, we must offer *him*, or have all rejected. We must when we begin to bless, turn our selves with old *Jacob*, to this *Caput lectuli*, this beds-head, whereon only the soul can rest, or leaning upon the top of this *Staff*, as the *Apostle* renders it, the only *Staff* wherein old *Israel* trusts ; the only *Staff* whereon we rely for mercy, and acceptance. This is the name of the *Angel*, in whom only we are to bless, in whom only we are blest, in whom either *God* blesses us, or *we* him. This is the *sum*, he the chief of all our oblations, all our blessings by oblation : and the blessing both of our resolutions and endeavours all : without whom we can do neither the one nor other, neither resolve good nor practice it. He therefore is to be offered with all thankfulness to *God* by us ; his merits only to be pleaded by us, and the form of all our blessing thus to run, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy holy Son, the Child Jesus give the praise*. It was not our own arm that helped us to him, 'tis not our own arms that can hold him, 'tis not our own strength that can keep him, 'tis not our own hands that can present any offering worthy of the least acceptance. To *God* only therefore be the praise, to *Christ* only the merit of all our blessings.

Thus are we lastly to pray too, that *God* would accept us and our blessing. Bless him with our *petitions*.

I. That

1. That he would please to pardon all our sins, or pass by all our weakneses in this days, in every days performance: our neglects, our coldneses, our drinesses, our wearinesses, and all the issues of our infirmities any ways.

That (2.) he would accept our offerings, and be pleased with us in his Son, accept us in his beloved.

That (3.) he would grant us the benefit of that holy *Sacrament* which we have this day received; all the benefits of his Death and Passion, the full remission of all our sins, and the fulness of all his graces signified and conveyed by those dreadful mysteries.

That (4.) he would particularly arm us every one of us, against their particular corruptions with strength and grace proportionable to every one, and effectual to us all. For proper and particular petitions, rising from the sense of our several necessities, are this day proper to be askt, and as easie to be obtained, whilst it is his own day, in which he invited us to him; and will deny us nothing that we shall earnestly, faithfully, and devoutly ask him. For this also to pray, to petition, is *benedicere*, and it is a way of blessing *God* to offer up our prayers; thereby acknowledging and confessing his power and goodness, which is no less in other words than to *praise* and *bles*s him: He that *offers praise* honours him, and he that presents prayers, professes and proclaims him Almighty Father, gracious, and good, and glorious *God*, at the very first dash, *God blessed for evermore*.

Light up now your *Candles* at this evening Service, for the glory of your morning Sacrifice: 'tis *Candlemas*. Become we all burning and *shining lights*, to do honour to this day, and the blessed armful of it. Let your souls shine bright with grace, your hands with good works: Let *God* see it, and let man see it; so bles we *God*. Walk we as Children of the *light*, as so many *walking lights*; and offer we our selves up like so many holy *Candles* to the *Father of light*. But be sure we *light* all our *lights* at this babes eyes, that lies so enfolded in our arms; and neither use nor acknowledge any other light for better than darkness, that proceeds from any other but this eternal light, upon whom all our best thoughts, and words, and works must humbly now attend like so many petty sparks, or rays, or glimmerings darted from, and perpetually reflecting thankfully to that glorious light; from this day beginning our blessing *God*, the only lightsome kind of life, till we come to the land of *light*, there to offer up continual praises, sing endless *Benedicite's*, and *Allelujahs*, no longer according to the Laws or Customs upon earth, but after the manner of Heaven, and in the *Choir* of *Angels*, with holy *Simeon*, and *Anna*, and *Mary*, and *Joseph*, all the Saints in light and glory everlasting. *Amen. Amen.*

He of his mercy bring us thither, who is the light to conduct us thither; he lead us by the hand, who this day came to lie in our arms; he make all our offerings accepted, who was at this *Feast* presented for us; he bles all our blessings, who this day so blessed us with his presence, that we might bles him again: and he one day in our several due times receive our spirits into his hands, our souls into his arms, our bodies into his rest, who this day was taken corporally into *Simeons* arms, has this day vouchsafed to be spiritually taken into ours. *Jesus* the holy Child, the eternal Son of *God* the *Father*. To whom with the holy Spirit, be all honour, and praise, and glory, and blessing from henceforth, for evermore. *Amen.*

A
S E R M O N
O N T H E
First Sunday in Lent.

2 C O R. VI. 2.

—Behold now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of
Salvation.



And truly such a *time* is worth beholding. For the business of it here being of no less concernment than Gods reconciling us to himself, *ver. 18, 19. of the former Chapter*; the committing the word and office of this reconciliation to his Ministers, *ver. 20. of the same Chapter*; the perswading us not to receive this grace in vain, *ver. 1. of this*; the time certainly wherein we may thus be reconciled, thus accepted to salvation, is worth the seeing, worth a *Behold*, and a *Behold*; worth laying hold on too, a *time* to be accepted, being a *day of salvation*.

And now *is the time*, says the *Text*, we are fallen upon. And *now is the Time* say the Days we are fallen among: Times of reconciliation, both. Days of Salvation, both. Indeed, the whole *Time* of the *Gospel* is no other. Yet the *Apostle* applies it here to the *Age* he wrote in. We may draw it down to ours we live in. But the *Church*, more particularly yet, applies it to the time we are now in keeping, the holy time of *Lent*; a time wherein the Office of Reconciliation is set open to receive sinners in; a time when the *Embassadors for Christ* (as the *Apostle* styles us, *ver. 20. of the foregoing Chapter*) *we that are workers together with him*, *ver. 5.* are more earnestly to beseech the people, and the people more especially to bestir themselves by the works of mortification and repentance to reconcile themselves to God; a time when in the *Primitive Church* notorious sinners were put to open penance, and punished in this world, that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord, says our *Church* in the *Commination*; and she herself by making these words part of her *Epistle* for the *First Sunday in Lent*, she cries out to us, as it were, *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*, this very *time*, make much of it, and lay hold upon it.

I shall give all their right, take in all the time we can, that seeing an accepted time there is, a day of salvation to be had, still to be had, we may
be

be sure not to miss it. 'Tis no idle trivial business, this ; We cannot be too careful for it. General and particular days and times, all to be taken, and all little enough to obtain salvation ; not to be thought much of (though it were much more) so we may but compass *that* at last.

I shall not therefore spend so precious time to study curiosity in a business so serious, or to torture the *Text* into nice Divisions. It shall suffice to shew you in it these particulars :

1. That an *accepted time* there is, some time, above others, wherein God is most ready to accept us.
2. That this *accepted time* is a *day of salvation* too ; wherein we shall not only merely be *accepted* ; but *accepted* so far also as to *salvation*, one or other. *Now is the day of*, &c.
3. That *Now is the Time*, this is the *Day*. It is before us, it is in present we need look no further.
4. That God himself here points us to it ; bids us *behold* it ; sets an *Ecce*, a mark upon it ; a red Letter, as it were, upon the *Day*, that we might mark and mind it, mind it above all other days, besides.
5. That we are therefore to do accordingly. *Behold*, and *behold* it *now*, and again *behold* it, again and again, and so *behold* it as to *accept* it, and apply us to it : bring all ends of the *Text* together, that we may find *Salvation* in the end. 'Tis an *accepted Time*, we therefore to make it so as well as count it so, make it perfectly *accepted* by accepting it.

These shall be the Particulars, and of them all, this is the sum ; That God in his goodness allowing us time to repent, to receive his grace, to reconcile our selves to him, and lay hold upon salvation, giving us daily deliverances and salvations too ; nay, shewing, and setting, and pointing us out here a time to accept and save us in ; It is certainly our duty to take notice of it, even *now* to do it, even as soon as may be to accept his goodness and not neglect the *day of salvation*. And

That we may not, but both accept and be accepted, we shall shew you first that such a time there is wherein we may. A time (1.) *still* wherein we may find acceptation ; that God has not shut up the day, and shut us out. A time (2.) wherein God is readiest to accept us, readier than at other times. That there is a *καιρος*, as well as a *καιρος*, a season, as well as time for it ; *καιρος ευκαιριος* to, a seasonable opportunity, when it will be the easier done, *The accepted time*. A time (3.) yet so confin'd and limited, that, for ought we know, there may be none beyond it. *καιρος*, it is not always, the season holds not ever. And *Now is the Time*, says in effect, anon perhaps it will not be ; for this *time* in the next words is expounded into a *day* ; and we know the day spends, and night will come on apace : So that a time, a ready time, a limited time there is for our repentance, and Gods accepting us. These three make up our first Particular we are now to begin with.

And (1.) that God still allows us time is worth a note. He does not owe it us. He might snatch us away in the height and fulness of our sins with as much justice, as he does it not in mercy. But he *deals not with us after our sins, nor rewards us according to our wickedness*, says Holy David, *Psalm. ciii. 10. Twelve hours of the day there are*, St. Joh. xii. 9. and every one of them God is not only ready to receive us, but goes out to seek us, St. Mat. xx. 3. and so on. And at what time soever a Sinner doth repent, (so it ran of old) and when he does, (so it runs now) and both the same, he

shall save his soul, God will accept him, *Ezek. xviii. 32.*

2. Yet for all that (2.) all times are not alike. We will not always find admittance at the same rate, with the same ease. As he will not always be chiding, so he will not always be so pleasing neither. We may knock, and knock again, and yet stand without a while, sometimes so long till our knees are ready to sink under us, our eyes ready to drop out, as well as drop with expectation, and our hearts ready to break in pieces, while none heareth, or none regardeth. We should have come before, or pitcht our coming at a better time. God is in bed, as it were, and at rest with his Children, cherishing and making much of them, he is not at leisure to open to such strangers. We must knock hard and importunately too, to get him to open to us. We are out of time.

But is he, who is *no acceptor of persons*, become now an acceptor of times? Or would he have us turn observers of them? Is there ever a star in heaven that can bring us into favour with the *Father of lights*? Any so lucky an aspect there that can guide us up into his presence? Can any, or all the Planets in *Sextile*, *Trine*, or *Square*, or any position else, make us fortunate in our new *Nativities*, or second *Births*, or give us audience with the *Almighty*? Alas! these are but as the *Star of Remphan* and *Moloch*, which only carry us into *Babylon*, confound all the projects we build upon them. The Star we are to look to, is the *Star of Jacob*; our *Sol*, the *Sun of Righteousness*; our *Venus*, the *Holy Spirit* of love; our *Jupiter*, God the Father, the great *Juvans Pater* of the World. These are the only Planets the Christian guides his motions by, that make our business go well, our time accepted, our days lucky. And

That such a time there is in the great Affairs of souls, a time of a readier acceptance with God, and what it is that makes it so, is now worth the considering.

That so it is the *Scripture* tells us plain. The *Prophet* from whom our *Apostle* takes the words immediately before the *Text*, and which he ushers in his own times and ours, says as much, *Isa. xlix. 8.* calls it *בְּתֵרָא רְצוֹן* *tempus voluntatis*, a time not only when he will, but when he is willing to hear us. *Tempus iudicium* we may render it, *the time of his good pleasure*; the *Vulgar* gives us it by *tempore placito*, a time when he is pleased, well pleased to hear us, and be pleasant with us. The same *Prophet* tells us too, of a time not only when he may be found, but when he is near, ready and at hand to hear us, *Isa. lv. 6.* The *Prophet David* expressly, *Psal. lxxix. 13.* speaks of an acceptable time to make our prayers in. And *To day if you will hear his voice*, in the *Psalmist*, paraphrased by the *Apostle*, *to day, while it is called to day*, shews there is a set day, or days of audience with God, wherein he sets himself, as it were, with all readiness to hear and help us; an *accepted time*.

And will ye, next, know what it is that makes it so? There are but two things that do. Either Gods being in a good or pleasing disposition towards us, or our being in a good and pleasing disposition towards him. Come we but to him in either of these, and we have nickt the time, we are sure to be accepted.

1. When he is looking upon him, in whom he is always well pleased, his beloved Son, when he is propounding him to us in his Word or Sacraments, scattering there, as it were, his gifts unto men, then in those Solemnities is one sort of his accepted times, wherein he is ready to do what we will desire him.

2. But (2.) when we our selves are in a good temper and disposition, that's another. *In tempore quo vos facitis voluntatem meam*, so the *Chaldee* paraphrases

paraphrases the Hebrew, the *tempus voluntatis*, or *tempus placitum*, Isa. xlix. 8. That time when you do what I would have you, says God, that's the *accepted time* when I will hear you; when our souls are in that order and obedience to our God that *he* would have them, then will *he* be in that readiness to succour *us* that *we* would have *him*.

The word *tempus* goes for season. And of seasons there are some, you know, more acceptable than others. Two very acceptable and pleasant in the year, the Spring and Summer. There are the same in the souls of men. A Spring, when our graces and virtues begin to sprout and blossom, bespread and cloth this earth we carry, when the *Sun of righteousness* begins to smile and warm us, when the air grows temperate, our passions and affections moderate within us, and all our powers breath nothing but Violets and Roses; this, as the *Prophet* styles it, the very time of love, a disposition and time we cannot but be accepted in, wherein God begins to be in love with us. There is a Summer too, when *the hills*, the highest pitch and spirit of our souls, *stand thick with Corn*, and *the valleys*, our lowest powers, our inferiour passions *laugh and sing*; when the bright raies of heaven shine hot upon us; when we are hung full with all heavenly fruits; when *our hearts* do even *burn within us*, and the whole desires even of our flesh, this dust, that covers us, are on fire for heaven; when our *hearts pant after the living brooks*, and our *souls are a thirst for God*, to come unto him to *appear before him*. This indeed is not only the time, but the fulness of it, when, coming so replenisht with grace and righteousness, we shall be fully accepted, and be sure not to be *sent empty away*.

Indeed, 'tis sometimes an Autumn and a winter season with us. A time when our leaves fall off, our graces and virtues decay and wither; when the fair beauty of a Summer-goodness either spent and dried away with too long a Sun-shine of prosperity; or blasted by the first approach of some cold wind, some touch of Winter, some affliction now at hand makes the day look sad about us, and melancholy too, no way pleasing. A time too there is when 'tis high Winter with us, our faith and charity grown cold and dead; when the streams of our wonted Piety lie, as it were, chain'd up in icy fetters, and *the Sun of righteousness* scarce appears above the Horizon to us. These are times not to expect to be accepted in. And such I told you were intimated here too, *Now is the accepted*, seems to say plain enough there is a time coming that will not be so; that's the third branch of our first Particular.

The one and twentieth year after the hundred and twentieth that God gave the *Old World* to repent in, *Gen. vi. 3.* was a year too late. The next day after *Ninivies* forty given her would not have done her work. *Hierusalem*, our Saviour tells us, had past her day. *Nunc autem abscondita*, the things of peace *then hidden from her eyes*, were too sad a proof her day was set, *St. Luke xix. 42.* *Nunc autem* is full opposite to *Nunc dies*. *To day if you will hear his voice*, *Heb. iii.* shews, *if you will not*, you must not look for another. They in the *First* of the *Proverbs* found no less, they had passed their time, refused Gods when he called upon them, *ver. 24.* They shall therefore call, and he will not answer; they shall seek him, and that early too, but he will not be found, *ver. 28.* he will but laugh at them for their pains, *ver. 26.* A shrewd Lesson to us not to neglect our day.

Indeed, it is not in the power of Astrology to calculate this time; nor of any humane judgment to *define* or *point* out the day when God has done accepting us; but sure such a one there is; or it were vain to fright us
with

with a *nunc autem*, with a *But*, when there is no such matter; if day after day would come and go, and yet never bring on a night wherein no man could work, Nay, 'tis requisite there should be so; for were there no such time, his very mercy would undo us, in the mercy of the most highest; in his highest mercies we should infallibly miscarry, and go away without repentance. Nor would his justice have time to shew it self, if no time came amiss, or short of mercy. 'Tis mercy enough that he allows us time of repentance, time to come in; and gives us (1.) a lesson to be thankful, and to take it. Yet (2.) he adds a greater, tells us of an *accepted time*, when he keeps open Court, and gives ready audience to all that come, and may teach us (2.) to seek and search that out, that it slip not by us. Nay, 'tis a mercy (3.) to stint it too, to bound and limit it; we else likely would never come, put it off so long till we were past coming; and reads us (3.) a lecture against presumption, as yet, the concealing of those bounds and limits reads us (lastly) another against despair. All these lessons to be learn'd from this first particular, that *an accepted time* there is, wherein above other times God will accept us.

And yet there are degrees also of acceptation. The accepting us (1.) to pardon, not imputing to us our former sins, nor reckoning to us our past unkindnesses, but allowing us the liberty still of new addresses to him. There's a time for that. The accepting us (2.) into favour, not only leaving open the way, but affording us the means also to bring us to him; the filling us with mercy, and loving kindness: there's a time for that. The accepting us (3.) to salvation too. There's a day here next for *that*, and 'tis our second observation.

II. A day indeed: all time, nor all accepted time neither is not day. Salvation it is that makes it day: all time without it is but night and darkness; and in the brightest day that shines we sit but *in the shadow of death*, if we want the glances of salvation. Let God so accept us, as to hear and prosper us with riches and honour when we desire it. Let him accept us to a pardon when we beg it; let him admit us to new addresses, and some new favours too upon it; 'tis but a dawn or twilight still, 'tis not perfect day till salvation it self shine forth upon us.

I confess *σωτηρια* here may have a temporal meaning, by the saving and delivering Christs faithful servants out of those distresses they were at that time under, or in fear of; and *σωτηρια ετοιμα μεγαλειουσαι*, in St. Peter, *Salvation ready to be revealed*, 1 Pet. i. 5. and *σωτηριαν ψυχης* the *saving the soul*, or life, in St. Matthew, and St. Mark, St. Mat. xvi. 15. St. Mark viii. 35. may prove the exposition good. Yet the *Apostles* discourse that ushers in the *Text* being about Gods *reconciling himself to us in Christ*, and sending his *Embassadors* to us to that purpose, in the end of the *preceding Chapter*, and an exhortation not to receive that grace in vain, pursuing in that design, *ver. 1.* enclines me rather to apply it to a spiritual sense. Nay the place of the Prophet, *Isa. xlix. 8.* to which Saint Paul alludes, seems to point particularly at this eternal salvation, *ver. 6, 7, 9.* extending it there to the very *Gentiles*, and *the ends of the earth*. But be it a temporal, or be it an eternal salvation; be it either, or be it both: both have their time, both have their day, and accepted ones both.

Indeed nothing can make them such so much as salvation; nothing like some great deliverance upon them: but every time is not fit for that. 'Tis necessary there should be times of trouble, and times of trial come before

before it : and 'tis not necessary we should be delivered presently. Till the fulness of time was come, God did not send it, nor him that brought it, *Gal. iv. 4.* Indeed the *Prophets* that foretold it, enquired and searched diligently, says *St. Peter*, *what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ did signify when it testified before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow*, when it witnessed of salvation, *1 Pet. i. 11.* but they could get no more revealed than this, that they did not minister to themselves but us, *ver. 12.* That such a time should come, that they were certain, but when it should they could not tell us.

Other salvations and deliverances have their due times too, and as uncertain. Those very *tempora novissima*, *those last times*, that the very *Apostle* speaks so oft of in their *Epistles* (who were under the dawning of salvation) have so large a latitude, that the great deliverance from the persecutions then upon them, but one of all of them lived to see, as confidently as all of them spoke of it. Enough to teach us patience as well as confidence, to expect with patience, and quietly wait for the salvation of God in all distresses ; as well as to hold up our heads with confidence and support our dying hopes and hearts that salvation will surely come in its due time. And yet I may add, we may notwithstanding fear too, that though it will be sure to come, we may not live to see it, or have the happiness to enjoy it. We may die upon *Mount Hor*, or *Nebo*, ere it come, unless we can now happily lay hold upon this little *Now*, this *now* set before us in the *Text*, the next particular, and take it *now* 'tis offered to us.

III. This *now* is but a little word, but there is much time, or rather many several times that lay claim to it here. The whole time of the *Gospel* in general. The times (2.) of the *Apostles* in special. *Our* times also (3.) among the rest. These *days* (4.) we are now a keeping more particularly above any other of ours. This *very day* (lastly) whilst it is called to day, before it is past over us, before night come on us.

The time of the *Gospel* from Christ's coming out of the Womb, as the Sun out of his Chamber, till he shall come again in the Clouds in glory, is this accepted time, this salvation-day at large. The day-spring of it rose with him at his first coming, but the day ends not till his second. There is a double emphasis in this *Now*. (1.) Now, and not before, (2.) Now and now, henceforth for ever. (1.) Now, and not before. In him 'tis first we hear of God well-pleased, *St. Matth. iii. 17.* All the times before he did but wink at, *Acts xvii. 30.* In his time first it is that we hear of saving people from their sins, *St. Matth. i. 21.* He the first of all since the world began, that *saved us from all our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us*, *St. Luke i. 71.* in whom we have deliverance of all sorts, salvation of all kinds. He in whom God *reconciling the world unto himself*, verse 19. of the foregoing Chapter. Nay, he the very first that indeed made it day : It was but *darkness, and the shadow of death*, we sat in before, *St. Luke i. 78, 79.* His is the only time, the time of the *Gospel*, the only time of *salvation*. Here it began, and hence now it goes on (2.) for ever ; for *St. John* calls it, *Evangelium aeternum*, *Rev. xiv. 6.* the everlasting *Gospel*, the *salvation* not to end even with the world : to the end of it, sure, to continue. *Moses* his *Law* had but its time and vanished ; and whilst it had, could not pretend so far as to make it day ; cloud, and shadows, and darkness all the while : The times of the *Gospel* are the only lightsome day, and a long one too, it seems ; for our Sun has promised still to shine upon us, and be with us ever, *to the end of the world*, *St. Mat. xxviii. 20.*

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But some more remarkable points of this time there are we must confess, that of the *Apostles* was (2.) the very especial *now* intended here, the *Now* in the *Text*: When the time of acceptation was at the fullest, when whole families together, *Acts* xvi. 34. and xviii. 8. thousands at a clap, *Acts* ii. 41. whole Towns and Countries came thronging in so fast, as if this very *now* were *now* or never; when Handkerchiefs, and Aprons, and the very shadow of an *Apostle* carried a kind of salvation with them, *Acts* v. 15. and xix. 12. when there was not only a large way opened for all sinners to come in, but all ways and means made to bring them in; when there were fiery tongues, both to inflame the hearts of the believers, and to devour the gain-sayers: when there was a Divine Rhetorick always ready to perswade, Miracles to confirm, Prophecie to convince, miraculous gifts and benefits to allure, strange punishments to awe sinners into the obedience of Christ, and the paths of salvation: when the time of that great deliverance too from the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the *enemies of the Cross of Christ*, so often reflected on through Saint *Paul's Epistles* was now nigh at hand, and the fast adhering to Christ the only way to be accepted and taken into the number of such as should be saved from it.

Yet (3.) this *Now* is not so narrow, but it will take in our times too. 'Tis true, those of the *Apostles* were furnished with greater means and power; yet ours, God be thanked, want not sufficient. We have the *Word*, and *Sacraments*, and *Ministers*, and *inward Motions*, *daily calls*, and *ready assistances of the Spirit*. It may be, too, somewhat more than they; a long track of experimental truths, and long sifted and banded reasons, and an uninterrupted *Tradition*, and a continued train of holy and devout *examples*, a vast disseminating the Christian Principles, and the perpetual protection of them we have, to make them more easie to be accepted; and tell us, that 'tis *Now* still *the day of salvation*.

And yet (4.) even both in *our* times, and the *Apostles*, there has been a *Now* *also*, some signal and peculiar time cull'd out of the rest, and set apart for this Reconciliation, the great affair that sets the *Ecce* upon it. If I tell you but of *St. Augustin's*, *Tota Catholica Ecclesia*, or *St. Leo's Institutio Apostolica*, or *St. Jeromes Secundum traditionem Apostolorum*, or *St. Ambrose's Quadragesimam nobis Dominus suo jejuniis consecravit* for this holy time we are in, the time of *Lent*; that they all call it *Apostolical* at the least: and *St. Ambrose* fetches it from our *Lord*, and consecrates it from *Christ himself*; and that it was always purposely designed for the time of reconciling sinners, and all the offices belonging to it, I shall need say no more to prove this *Now* in the *Text* is not ill applied, when applied to this very time. X

Most reasonable it is (1.) that some such there should be design'd, some time or days determined for a business of so great weight: we are not like else to have it done: we would be apt enough to put it off from time to time, and so for ever. Were there not some set days, I dare confidently affirm, God would have but little worship paid him; thousands would never so much as think of Heaven, or God.

And if it be reasonable some time be set us, there is (2.) no time fitter than where we are: 'tis the very time of the year when all things begin to turn their course; when Heaven and Earth begin to smooth their wrinkled brows, and withered cheeks, and look as if they were reconciled. 'Tis the spring and first-fruits of the year, which upon that title is due to God, and fittest to be dedicate to his Service, and the business of our souls. (3.) 'Tis the time when the blood begins to warm, and
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the contest is now in rising between the Flesh and Spirit ; which now taken up at first and quell'd, may be the easier reconciled to peace, and the body subdued into obedience to the soul ; and so Gods grace not received in vain. (4.) The spring in which it is, 'tis *tempus placitum*, the pleasant time o'th' year ; fittest then to fit with the *tempus placitum* in the Text, fit to be employed to set our selves to please God in, to make it perfectly such. And sure we cannot be displeased that the Church (5.) has thought so too, chosen it as the fittest. Surely it is or should be the more acceptable for that.

And if this time (besides) has all times in it, that Solomon himself could think of, *Eccles. iii. 1.* It must needs be *δυνάμις*, and *ἐν παντί* too, every way acceptable : and all of them it has. (1.) There is, says he, a time to be born, &c. and so goes on : this is both a time to be born in, and a time to die in. *Lent*, a time to die unto the world, and to be born and live to Christ. (2.) 'Tis a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted ; to plant vertue, and to pluck up vice. (3.) 'Tis a time to kill, and a time to heal ; to kill and mortifie our earthly members, and to heal the sores and ulcers that sin hath made, by a diet of fasting and abstinence. (4.) 'Tis a time to break down, and a time to build ; to break down the Walls of *Babylon*, the fortresses of sin and Satan, and to build up the Walls of the *New Jerusalem* within us. (5.) 'Tis a time to weep, and a time to laugh ; to weep and bewail the years we have spent in vanities, and yet rejoyce that we have yet time left to escape from them. (6.) 'Tis a time to mourn, and a time to dance ; to manifest our repentance by some outward expressions, and thereby dispose our selves every day more and more for *Easter* Joys. (7.) 'Tis a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together ; to remove every stone of offence. and as *lively stones to be built up*, as *St. Peter* speaks, *into a spiritual house*. (8.) 'Tis a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing ; to refrain from all wanton and loose embraces, and pour out our selves wholly into the arms of our *Blessed Jesus*, (9.) 'Tis a time to get, and a time to lose ; to get Heaven by violence, and lose Earth, our worldly goods (so the worldling counts it) upon Alms and Charities, to cast away Earth to purchase Heaven. (10.) 'Tis a time to keep, and a time to cast away ; to keep all good resolutions, and cast away the bad ones. (11.) 'Tis a time to rent, and a time to sew ; to rent and tear off all ill habits, and to begin good ones. (12.) 'Tis a time to keep silence, and a time to speak ; to keep silence from bad words, all idle, ad wanton, and scurrilous language, and give our selves to good discourses. (13.) 'Tis a time of love, and a time of hate ; to love God, and hate our selves ; or love our souls, and hate our sins. (14.) 'Tis in a word, a time of War, and a time of Peace ; to make war against all our ghostly enemies, the flesh, the Devil, and the world ; and reconcile our selves to God, our Neighbour, and the Church. To all these purposes serves the time of *Lent*, for them 'twas instituted at first, and for them it is continued ; and can any Christian now think it should not be accepted upon such a score as this? or are any days liker the day of salvation than those that are spent thus? or it is our own fault if it be not : or is any time more fit to be stil'd an accepted time, than this that is the very comprehension of all times? a time every way fitted up for all the designs of salvation? for calling publick offenders to accompt, for putting notorious sinners to open penance, for reconciling penitents, and receiving them again into the Church, for promoting piety and vertue,

for admitting *Profelytes* to holy Baptism at the end of it, for preparing all of us for the Blessed *Eucharist* all the way, by solemn prayers and preaching, more than at other times, by fastings, and watchings, and holy retirements, and strict devotions, and every way conforming us to the image of Christ, the fasting, and dying, and rising with him, that we may so also be accepted by him? These were the practices of *Lent* in the *Primitive Church* of Christ, wish'd and call'd for too in *Ours*, in the *Epistles*, and *Collects* for it, and the *Communion* that begins it. And by the afflictions, and necessities, and distresses, and labours, and watchings, and fastings, and pureness, &c. that follow immediately upon the *Text* (things all so answering to this time) I cannot say but the *Text* may stand as an *In diebus illis*; a kind of prophetick designation at least of this time of *Lent*, has caus'd the words I am sure to be so applied by many of the *Antients*, and made a part by us also of the *Lent Office*.

But this very time (so dilatory are we, and so ready to put off holy duties) is yet perhaps too large, and these forty days too many to close us to our work. Nay, the *day* has many hours, twelve, says Christ, to walk in: And if we may guess from our ordinary guise and custom, we are like enough to defer all to the last hour. I must set an *accent* therefore upon this *nūc*, this *Now*. Now, *Lent* or not; *Now* fast we or fast we not; Now is the very time we must begin our reconciliation, look to our salvation; that though the name of *Lent* should be distasteful (as too much it is) yet however we may not slip our time. 'Tis the only sure part of time we have, the present, the only day of salvation; for peradventure ere the next moment we are gone, and clearly cast without the confines of it. Not only then *to day*, whilst it is called *to day*, but even *Now*, whilst it is called *Now*, is the sure *Now* of salvation. To all these *Now's*, God here points us by an *Ecce*, *Behold, now is the*, &c.

IV. And indeed it is no more than needs, that he should point and set us out some time even to accept our own salvation. Time and times pass over us, and we think not of it: A piece of Land, a Wife, a yoke of Oxen are more thought upon every day than that. We our selves do but little mind it (I am sure we live as if we did not much:) The Church cannot get us to it with all the Fasts and Feasts she sets us. Our Ministers the *Embassadors* that are sent about it perswade little with us; we had need of *Prophet* and *Apostle* too to say it over and over again unto us: and 'tis so in the verse we have the *Text* in. The *Lords day* it self, did it not bear his name upon it, would as easily vanish into a neglect as all other *Holy days*. 'Tis only the opinion that he himself commanded or appointed *that*, which keeps it up a while above the rest: whether so or no, we dispute not now; It is not to the *Text*. These things I shall tell you, are there without dispute; (1.) Set days and times are there, times set apart for the promoting of our salvation, particular ones too, *Ecce nunc tempus, nunc dies*. Times (2.) that are so set, are so far from hindering, that they are even the very days of salvation. Times (3.) may so still be set by the *Apostles*, or their successors; they have the power to design them, with St. Paul here, to put the *nunc* upon them. Times (lastly) so set have an *Ecce* upon them; somewhat more upon them than other days: are to be observed, to be accepted. Do we therefore now accordingly, says my last particular, *Behold* them, and *accept* them, *Behold now is the*, &c.

V. *Behold*, (1.) and take notice, such a time there is, such a day as we have been speaking of; Christ himself was anointed to preach and publish

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lish it, St. Luke iv. 19. *the acceptable year of the Lord.* The *Apostles* were sent with the like Commission, *ver. 19.* of the former *Chapter* of this *Epi-
stle*, and they beseech us to take notice of it, *ver. 20.* whilst they pray us *in Christ's* stead to be reconciled upon it.

Behold therefore (2.) and again behold it; that is, not only take notice of it, (that may be perhaps a little by the by) but consider it. There's a double *Ecce* upon it, take notice of that, and sit down and lay it to your hearts, and chew it over and over; say thus within thy self, God has been gracious to me from time to time, expected me long from day to day, proffering me grace, proffering me salvation, even beseeching and entreating me to accept them, *Lord what is man, Lord what is man, that thou shouldst be thus mindful of him?* that thou shouldst so regard him? that thou shouldst thus follow him from one end of the year unto another, from one accepted time to another; from *Feast* to *Feast*, from *Fast* to *Fast*, from *Feast* to *Fast*, from *Christmas* to *Lent*, from *Lent* to *Christmas*, from *Christmas* to *Lent* again: from one *Lent* to another, from one day to another; begging and beseeching him not to refuse his own salvation? Well may it deserve *Ecce* upon *Ecce*, consideration upon consideration; admiration too as well as consideration, and admiration upon admiration: (*Ecce* may pass for a note of both) to be beheld so long, till our eyes and thoughts are not able to behold, or think any longer.

And (3.) to day to set upon it, this *nunc* to begin it in. *Thou knowest not, O man,* thou knowest not how short thy time is, whether this day may not be thy last, whether this *Now*, this very moment may not at least be the last time that this salvation may be offered thee. Many are the times I confess I told you that challeng'd right to be among the accepted ones; but remember I told you the present was the only sure one. The *Apostle* surely thought so when he was so earnest for it, *Heb. iii.* that within the compass of nine verses he three several times at least puts them in mind to take care *to day to hear Gods voice, while to day it is*, as if to morrow would not serve the turn, or the day of salvation were gone at night; salvation gone, or we gone, and all gone with us. Thousands there be in the world who now *are*, who within a few minutes will be no more; and why mayest not *thou* be one of them? so much the sooner, in that the so long contempt of Gods mercy may justly provoke him thus to fetch thee off, and throw thee by. 'Tis not without reason that St. *Paul* doubles his files, doubles the *Nunc* as well as the *Ecce*; calls as it were in haste, *Now, Now*, catch hold on't.

Indeed nor I, nor you can time it better. There are three special points of time that meet here now, all extreamly fit to perswade and move us to set upon the work, and business of salvation, to apply our selves seriously to our Repentance, and Gods Service. The particular time of *Lent*, this special day of *Confirmation*: the general and continued day of that latter great salvation and deliverance we still enjoy.

For that particular (1.) of *Lent*, you have heard already all the helps it has for the furtherance of salvation, the fastings and watchings, the severities and restraints, the austerities and rigours it requires, and brings towards it. I only add, 'tis *Palm-Sunday* within a day or two, a day fit to go out to meet your Saviour with *Hosanna's*, and bring salvation home, with *Palms* and *Triumphs*. The holy week's at hand, a Week formerly of greater devotion and strictness than any of the rest. *Good Friday* and *Easter* are a coming, the great *Anniversaries* of our salvation; the fittest days the properest *ways* to mind it in, for all to do it. But for some,

For some of you, you who come to be confirmed: this very day is a day of salvation in particular; wherein I hope you shall have reason to return, and say what our blessed Master said to *Zachens*, This day is salvation come unto your houses. A day wherein by the *Imposition of holy hands* your Saviour seems sensibly to accept you, to receive you signally now after your first stragglings into his house and Church again, to receive you into his acquaintance, to receive you into his favour, to receive you into his protection, to receive you to his benediction, and send you away with it, with all the blessings of his Holy Spirit, which are by the outward ceremony of laying on the *Bishops* hands, and pouring out his prayers poured down upon you: only remember you come hither to be reconciled, and beg a blessing; that's your business. Remember that upon your knees you beg it, and with your hearts desire it; and then upon your heads be it. Be it will, I dare assure you; wisdom, and understanding, and counsel, and ghostly strength, and knowledge, and godliness, and Gods holy fear; all these gifts and blessings of the Holy Spirit, as they are prayed for in it, so will be upon you by it, to confirm you in the Faith, if you now resolve (as it is required of you in the *Preface*) to stand to those promises you have already made in holy *Baptism*, and stedfastly determine to be Christians hereafter as you should be, to live and die in the obedience of Christ, to keep his Faith entire, and his Commandments to the utmost of your power. Do so to day, and to day then will be your *accepted time*, will be to you certainly a *day of salvation*.

But (3.) the days of salvation, we have now almost three years enjoyed may justly demand to be remembred too to spur us on to take a little more care how we spend our time. I am afraid our late days have been as much consum'd in vanity, as our former years were spent in trouble. We have forgot our deliverance, we live rather as if we had been *deliver'd up* (as they in the *Prophet* excus'd themselves, *Jer. vii. 10.*) *to do all abominations*: we seem to have quite lost the memory of our temporal salvation; and for our spiritual we go on daily, as if we either cared not whether God would save us or no, or at least we would venture it; or as if we said in *plain English*, let him save us if he will, be it else at his own peril if he will not; or in short, as if we bid him damn us if he durst. Yet never were there such days of salvation as we have seen, never such deliverances as we have found; never were such cast-aways, never men so rejected, so despis'd, so trampled on, so again accepted on a sudden. Good God, was it for our righteousness, was it for our merits, was it by our own strength, or wit, or power, we were delivered? alas! Lord we had none of these: was it for our Oaths, or Perjuries, or Blasphemies, or Sacriledges, or Rebellions, or Schisms, or Heresies, or Thefts, or Prophaneness, or Wickedness, or Villanies, that thou didst deliver us, to our Kingdom, and our Church, to our peace, and plenty, and prosperity, to all the happy means of Piety and Religion, to all the beauties of holiness, and opportunities of salvation? Enough indeed, O Lord, of these we could have shewed thee, but these were reasons why thou shouldest not deliver us, It was only, O Lord, because *thou* wouldest have the day, and wouldest save us, because thou wouldest. But for all that (my Brethren) take heed we sin not so again. God has set us here a time, points it out to us with an *ecce*, and an *ecce*, that we can no longer plead ignorance to miss it; we are already encompassed with the day of salvation, and we are never like to see such a one again, if we should lose this; let us abuse it then no longer, lest some horrible night, e're long overtake us, some terrible

terrible judgment come upon us, and hurry us hence, before we are aware, into the horrors and miseries of everlasting darkness.

4. By this time you understand this *ecce* is not to set us a gazing up into Heaven, or observing days, and months, and times, and years, but to retrieve our months of vanity, as holy *Job* calls them, and fill the days we live with more acceptable employments. For God having so late accepted our persons, and our complaints, and prayers, and tears, or rather us indeed without them; and desiring only of us that we would but accept and employ those mercies, and all others of his to our own salvation; we should be methinks the most unreasonable of men to be so unkind to God, as either not to receive his grace, or receive it still in vain. Worthy it is of better usage, for *αὐτός* here is the same with *πῶς ἀποδεχῆς ἀξίως*, 1 Tim. iv. 9. Accepted here the same with that *worthy of all acceptation* there. The very time, says our Apostle, is such, what then is the salvation of it? that surely much more.

Accept we it therefore, and the time of it, with all readiness, with all thankfulness, with all humility. Take we all the opportunities henceforward of salvation, look every way about us, and slip none we can lay hold on. This *ecce, ecce*, reiterated, is to rouse us, and to tell us that our *ecce* should answer *Gods*. *Ecce tempus*, says he, *ecce me*, or *nos*, say we. Behold the time, behold the day, says God. Behold *us*, say we, O God, our *hearts are fixed*, our *hearts are fixed*, our hearts are ready, our hearts are ready to accept it. *Ecce adsum*, says *Abraham*, behold here I am, *Ecce venio*, says *Christ*, Lo I come to do thy will, O God. Behold thy servants are ready, says *David*, to do whatsoever my Lord shall appoint. And behold, *we are coming*, *we are here*, *we are ready* with thee according to thy heart; these are the returns or *Eccho's* we are to make God back again.

Nor is it time to dally now. Time is a flitting Post, Day runs into night ere we are aware: this Now is gone as soon as spoken, and no certainty beyond it, and no salvation if not accepted ere we go hence. There are I know, that cry, to day shall be as yesterday, and to morrow as to day; all things continue as they were since our Fathers fell asleep. And this thing you call Religion, does but delude us, and our Preachers do but fright us; this salvation they talk of we know not what to make of it, if there be such a thing (indeed) the day is long enough, we may think time enough of it many years hence. Such scoffers indeed St. *Peter* told us we should meet with. But I hope better things of you (my beloved) and such as accompany salvation. And I have told you nothing to fright you from it. I have not scar'd you with the antient rigour, nor terrified you with primitive austerities. I have only shewed you there is such a thing as salvation to be thought of, and 'tis time to set about it. You cannot fast, you'll tell me, you are weak and sickly, it will destroy you. You cannot watch, you say, it will undo you; you cannot give Alms, you have no moneys: You cannot come so oft to Prayers as others, your business hinders you. But however, can you do nothing towards it, towards your own salvation? can you not accept it when 'tis offered; can you not consider and think a little of it? If you do but that, I shall not fear but you will do more. When you have business you can spare a meal, now and then to follow it; and nothing's made on't when you are at your sports, or play, you can sit up night after night, and catch no hurt, for a new fashion, impertinence, or vanity, you can find money, and time enough at any time, for any of these. I desire you
would.

would but do as much, nay half as much (I am afraid I may say the tenth part so much) to save your souls, spend but as much time seriously upon that as you do upon your dressing, your visits, your vanities, (not to require any thing so much of you upon that, as upon worldly business) and dare promise you salvation, you shall be accepted at that day, at that day, when our short Fasts shall be turned into eternal Feasts, our petty *Lents* consummate into the great *Easters*, when time it self shall improve into eternity, this day advance into an everlasting Sun-shine, and salvation appear in all its glories.

Accept us now, O Lord, we pray thee, in this accepted time; save us we beseech thee in this day of salvation, that we may one day come to that eternal one, through him, in whom only we are accepted, thy beloved Son Christ Jesus. To whom, with thee and thy Holy Spirit, be consecrated all our times, and days; all our years, and months, and hours, and minutes from henceforward: to whom also be all honour, and praise, all salvation and glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Ser-

A
S E R M O N
O N T H E
Second Sunday in Lent.

I C O R. ix. 27.

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.



Urus sermo, A hard Text you'll say, a whipping Sermon towards, that begins with *castigo*, and ends with *reprobis*; that is so rough with us at the first as to tell us of chastning, and *keeping under the body*, and so terrible at the last as to scare us with being *castaways* unless we do it. And that too, *cum aliis predicaverim*, the greatest Preachers; the very Apostles themselves after all their pains no surer of their Salvation than upon such severe conditions.

If the Preacher will needs be preaching this, tell us of *disciplining our bodies*, talk to us of being *castaways*, *Quis cum audire potest, who can endure him*, who can bear it?

Well, bear it how we can, think of it what we please, be the doctrine never so unpleasing, it must be preacht, and bear it we must; unless we know what to preach better than St. Paul, or you what to hear or do better than that great Apostle.

And 'tis but time for us to preach, for you to hear it. Men daily fool away their souls by their tenderness to their bodies, and their salvation by the certainties they pretend of it. 'Tis time to warn them of it.

And this Time as fit a time, as any can be, to do it in, the holy time of Lent. A time set apart by the holy Church to chasten and subdue the body in. And the opportunity is fallen into my hand, among the rest, and *ve mihi si non*, I cannot excuse my self if I do not take it, if I neglect the occasion to do my utmost to keep my self and you from being *castaways*.

I know people do not love to hear on't, and the Preacher shall get little
by

by it but hard censures, be *ὡς ἀδόκιμος*, as the *Apostle* speaks, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. be half a *Reprobate*, a *Castaway* himself for preaching it. But seem we what you please, be it how it will, I venture on it upon *St. Pauls* account; and both you and I, as high as we bear our selves upon our assurances that we are the *Elect*, if we will be sure indeed not to be *Reprobates*, must be content to hear of it lest we be so.

'Tis a plain *Text*, the words very plain, need no *Philip* to expound them. Nothing could be said, nothing can be plainer. For he that says, *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest I should be a Castaway* says nor more nor less, than unless I do so, so I shall be, for all my great flourish and appearance, for all my other great performances.

And it being an *Apostle* without exception, *ver.* 1. 2. one who knew his Office, and performed it beyond all that was required of him, *ver.* 14. 18. knew his Power, and how to stand upon it, *ver.* 4. 5. understood well his Christian Liberty, what he might do, or leave undone, *ver.* 10. who notwithstanding all his power, and liberty, and privilege, and performances falls here to discipline his body, lest after all he should prove a *castaway*, fall short of his Crown and lose the reward of all his labours. If he can find no other means to avoid the one but by the doing of the other. *Τὸ αὐτὸ ποιεῖν ὑμεῖς*, says *St. Chrysostom*, what can we say for our selves? Say, I hope, it concerns us, and we will look to it, will set about it. Better Authority we need not than the *Churches*, as for the time. Better example we cannot desire than *St. Pauls*, as to the thing; and better Motive I know none to perswade either, than *μὴ πῶς ἀδόκιμος γίνωμαι* that we may save our selves from being *Castaways*.

I shall not obscure the business by any nice Division of the words. Two general Parts shall serve the turn.

I. *St. Pauls* wholsom Discipline for his body; And,

II. His godly fear, for body and soul. Or

I. His Disciplining and strict ordering of his body; And

II. The Ground and Reason why he does so.

The first is in those words, *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.* The second in those, *Lest by any means when I have preached unto others I myself should be a Castaway.*

In the first we have *St. Paul*, his Body, and the work he makes with it, or the Discipline he uses towards it. Three Points to be considered.

In the second we have three more to make up the Reason, why he does so use it. Because (1.) he would not be a *Castaway*, *μὴ πῶς ἀδόκιμος*, lest I be. Because (2.) there may be many ways to make us so, lest by any means I be so, supposes by many I may be so. Because (3.) there is no avoiding being so without it, all our preaching and doing will not do without it. (1.) Lest I be a *Castaway*. (2.) Lest by any means I be a *Castaway*. (3.) Lest when I have preacht to others I should be a *Castaway* notwithstanding.

I could give you the Parts (perhaps) in nearer terms applied to the Metaphor coucht in the words. But the Text is plain, and the Parts I would leave plain, and I would be plain and understood. Yet under whatever notions I should give you them; This is, and would be still the sum of all; that the keeping under the body, and the bringing it into subjection is a business to be mainly lookt to, lookt to by the best and greatest, the very *St. Pauls* among us; and that under no less penalty and danger than being *Castaways* if we neglect it; our highest privileges our greatest services, our most Christian Liberties no plea at all to exempt us from it.

I go on now with the Parts in order, and begin with the first general, *St. Pauls disciplining and ordering of his body.*

Where we have these three particulars to treat on; *Him, his body, and his ordering it.* But I begin with *Him first*, for so I find him set, set here before his *body*. I would we would all set our selves so too; set our selves above our bodies, value and prize our souls (for *they* chiefly are our selves) before our bodies; at least our *selves*, that is, the good of the whole man before the pleasing of that mortal part, we would not then make our selves such slaves and drudges to it, as we do; face and brave damnation for a petty lust, for a little meat or drink, for the satisfaction of the belly.

Indeed, could we pretend to know how to order our selves better than *St. Paul*, I might have spared this *Note*, but all the pretences we have against the strict ordering of the body, that *St. Paul* here takes up, are all answered in *his* person, *his* very doing it, if we well consider it. For all the arguments or pretences we have against it, are either (1.) our *business* we cannot tend it; or (2.) our *weakness*, we cannot bear it; or (3.) our holiness, we do not need it; or (4.) our Christian Liberty, it is against it; or (5.) other things will do as well, we may well spare it; or (6.) a less matter will serve the turn, we may be saved without it. But all these shall I shew you might *St. Paul* plead, yet it seems all would not serve to excuse *him* from this hard dealing with his body we read of in the *Text*.

1. We plead our weakness, we are not able to use this rigour. But *I*, this *I*, *St. Paul* was as full of weaknesses as any of us, and yet he could: *who is weak*, says he, *and I am not weak*? 2 Cor. xi. 29. so weak sometimes, that it cast him into a trembling, *much trembling*, 1 Cor. ii. 3. And *St. Paul* took this way rather to cure it, than to encrease it. And indeed, those very weaknesses we complain of rise from the pampering our bodies, are cured by our strict ordering them. Nay, those impatiences, and peevishnesses, and nicenesses, and sinful infirmities, which grow so strong upon us in our sicknesses would not do so, were the body kept but a little under when we were well.

But (2.) though we could bear it, you'll say, we cannot tend it. Not tend it? Why *St. Paul* upon whom the care of all the Churches lay, who was in continual journeyings and labours for it, 2 Cor. xi. 23, 25, 28. full of weariness and painfulness about it, was yet in watchings often, in fastings often, ver. 27. of the same Chapter, keeping under his body, still, for all his business, notwithstanding all his other business forgets not this.

Will you say now (3.) you do not need it, you are holy enough without it, you are Gods Elect, and do not want it, want no such poor beggarly means to help you out? What, are you holier than *St. Paul*? What, are you better than *he*, that dares avow he was not inferior to the chiefest Apostles? Have you been in more Heavens than he? Heard more Revelations than he? Have you more assurances of your Election or Salvation than he that was arrived at that height to be persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature could separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus? Rom. viii. 38, 39. are you better than he? If you be not, you had best take the course he did. If you be, you had best yet take his course to keep you so.

Yea, but (4.) our Christian Liberty is entrencht on by it. We must not by this very same Apostles advice and counsel be subject to those Ordina-

nances of touch not, taste not, handle not, Col.ii.20,21. and yet those things seem to make much for the neglecting of the body, and the not satisfying of the flesh, ver. 23. but that we must not be brought under the power of any, 1 Cor. vi.11. No, but the body must be brought under ours, for all that, says our *Apostle*. Says he so? He says no more than he does, he does so too. And yet he knew his power and Christian Liberty to the ful, had power to eat and drink, he tells us, ver. 4. and to do neither; power to work, and not to work, to forbear working, ver. 6. was free, ver. 19. yet from this it seems he is not free, unless he will fight as one that beats the air in the verse before the *Text*. He knows no liberty that can allow the liberty to his body not to be kept under and subjected unless it please.

Nor (5.) does he (whatever we think of it) think he may spare it upon the account of other virtues, as if it were enough to be diligent at our prayers, to be frequent at Sermons, to be orderly in our Families, to be just in our dealings, to be honest in our Callings, to be charitable to the poor, to be friendly to our neighbours, or the like; and let this subduing the body go whither it will. St. Paul cannot be suspected to have been wanting in any of these, yet he must needs add this grace also it seems to make all sure; keep the body under, that he may so keep those graces safe.

For a less matter, lastly, will not serve the turn, St. Pauls labours, and journeys, and perils, and stripes, and prisons, and deaths, as great and as often as they were, must have this also added to them; the flesh must have some thorn or other to keep it in subjection; If God send it not, if the devil, by his permission, buffet not the flesh, we must do it our selves, lest we be exalted above measure; those very performances which we think we have most reason to glory in, will but puff us up, and cast us sheer away, if we preserve not our body in that lowliness and subjection that we should.

So now, if we think good to guide our selves by St. Pauls authority and example, there is none so weak, none so busily employed, none so holy, that can exempt himself; no Christian Liberty, no other graces, (though never so many) nor any other performances that can be pleaded against it. All sorts of persons are included in St. Pauls, and in this / all objections against it are sufficiently answered, and we all included and obliged; for if such a one as the glorious St. Paul could find no exemption, I know not what Christian can expect it. You'l confess it perhaps, when you have considered what this body is you are to deal with, the next Particular we are to handle.

And by the body here may be understood either the flesh it self, or the fleshliness of it; the body it self, or the sinful passions and affections rising in it. To be sure, take we both.

And indeed, we can neither be sure nor safe, if (1.) the passions and affections be not kept within their bounds, if we suffer our appetites to rule us, our angers to transport us, our desires to harrow us, our fears to distract us, our hopes to abuse us, or any other of that impetuous crew to over-bear us. They must all be made underlings, kept within rule and compass, or we are lost.

Nay, and to keep them so, this very bulk of flesh (2.) must be kept so too: for keep this but high it is impossible to keep them low. Stuff the body with meat and drink, let it lodge soft, and lie long, let it have the fill of ease and pleasure, & facile desipumat, it froths into lust, it boils into anger, it swells into pride, it rises into rebellion, it leaks into looseness,
it

it mosses into idleness; it fills the brain with fogs, the heart with filth, the liver with wanton heats, the mouth with unsavoury language, and all the members with disorder and confusion. Do but take away the meat, and let it fast a while; take it from the bed, and let it watch another while; take it from ease and tenderness, and set it to some hard and unpleasing work; let it feel a little cold, a little labour, a little course and rough usage for a time, and you shall see how humble it will grow, how much under you shall have it, how orderly it will be. It will do any thing you would have it.

But to make all sure, every part must have its share; the eye must be watcht, the heart kept under guard, the tongue bridled, the palate curb'd, the ears fenced, the hands restrained, the knees bow'd down, the feet kept in, and all the members under, for they are all but one body, 1 Cor. xii. 14. this body that is to be brought into subjection, make up but that *Jumentum animæ*, that beast that carries the soul, and is therefore to be rid, like a beast, with bit and bridle, with whip and rod, lest it fall upon us, or fall with us and cast us.

Be St. Paul's body, *σῶμα μου*, never so good, so orderly, so chaste a body, so it seems it must be used, nay, such it cannot be unless it be so used. Let no man be so bold to think his body in better order than St. Paul's, and yet here's a *μὴ πῶς*, for his, a kind of fear of some miscarriage, a fear some evil may rise from it.

Yea, even that very body of his *τὸ σῶμα μου*, which had been at so many posts, endured so many lashes already, been in so many prisons, so many perils, so many storms, and colds, and shipwracks, so many necessities and infirmities; this very *τὸ σῶμα μου*, this very body, as much as it has suffered, and as much as it has done, I must yet keep under, says St. Paul, still more and more keep under for all that. *My body*, says he, and *mine*, say I, and *mine*, must every one say, though we were all St. Pauls, as holy as he, had done and suffered as much as he.

But what yet must it suffer more? Yes more; for as neer us as it is, it is our adversary, and the worse the nearer. There are nothing but daily contentions and jars between us, this *I* and this *body* are at continual odds; this *I* delights in the Law of God, and would do good, Rom. vii. 19, 22. this *body*, this flesh, there's no good dwells in it, ver. 18. this is for one thing, and that's for another; this for good, and that for evil; and the fewd oft grows so high; that this poor *I* is fain to cry out miserably sometimes: *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death*, this body that is like to kill me? And St. Paul brings in here himself and his own body (whosoever it was he brought in there) as two combatants a wrastring and the words here applied to them are *Agonistical*, drawn from the measure and fashion of combatants and wrestlers, and now we are coming next to treat of them. *But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.*

Now the business stands thus. Our *Apostle* being undervalued by the false *Apostles* has been vindicating his priviledge, his power, and his labours all along the *Chapter* till ver. 24. Yet lest for all his priviledge, power, and pains he should yet lose his reward and himself, his soul, and his Crown, heaven and glory at the last, by some miscarriage of his body, he betakes himself to the course of such as strive for other Crowns, orders his body as they do theirs, denies it the full liberties it would take, the fullest liberties he might lawfully give it too, deals with it as his adversary, does what he can to get it under his command, beats and

buffets it, and bears hard upon it till he has brought it fully into subjection.

Shall I shew you how he does it? I will not stir out of the *Text* to do it. The words in one sense or other, after one reading or other will do it for me. Two words there are here, ὑπομάζω, or ὑπομίζω, and δουλαγωγῶ, upon which the business hangs, keeping under and bringing into subjection.

ὑπομάζω comes from ὑπόμα. *blew marks under the eyes*, and signifies primarily to give blew eyes, as those do one another who go to cuffs. ὑπομίζω, as others read it, from μίζω, or ὑπομάζω in the *Dorick Dialect*, is *stringendo premo, crucio, onero, strictâ manu teneo, is to suppress, or press and streighten, vex, torment, or burthen, or carry a streight hand over*. Both these go to the keeping under of the body. Some ὑπόμα we must give it, some marks by which we may know it again, by which it may remember us, *the marks of the Lord Jesus*; such St. Paul bare about him in his body, Gal. vi. 17. And a streight hand over it we must keep, give it but hard usage, if we intend to keep it under.

From this various writing and rendring of the word, three several ways we have pointed to us to keep the body under, Watching, Fasting, and hard usage. Nothing (1.) commonly makes us look blewer under the eyes, sets those ὑπόμα upon us, then watching, *that does properly ὑπομάζειν*. Nothing (2.) more afflicts and brings down the body, brings us ὑπό, as the combatant strives to do his adversary, more suppresses the heat and insurrection of it than fasting does. Nothing (3.) more streightens, vexes, and torments it, does more ὑπομίζειν than the holding a strict hand over it, and using it to hardships and severities, crossing and thwarting the rebellious and insolent humours of it. These the means the *Apostle* uses to keep his body under. Watching first.

And truly I put it first because I find it so in the *Apostles* practice, in *watchings*, in *fastings*, 2 Cor. vi. 5. Nay, and in *watchings* often, in *fastings* often, 2 Cor. xi. 27. And in the first and best times, when Christianity was in its glory, when men were Christians (for I know not what to call us now) it was much in use. So much in use, that St. *Chrysostome* tells us, they made their little Children rise at midnight, set them up in their beds, when they had new left their Cradles, there upon their knees to say their prayers. The holy watches were in those times so notable, that the very Heathens took notice of their *Hymnos antelucanos, their night Offices*; and not only their early *Hymns* before the light broke in, but whilst the night it self was in full course. Nor was it a piece of superstition, or a Religion of their own inventing. They thought they had Christs command to settle it, St. *Mat.* xxiv. 22. where he commands his *Disciples* themselves to watch; and where he complains of them that they did not, St. *Mat.* xxvi. 40. *Could ye not watch with me one hour? There is no evasion left to fancie it only a spiritual watchfulness commanded there, for there 'tis plainly bodily*. And the reason rendred for it being *left they enter into temptation*, must needs suppose it necessary still to be continued so long as the danger of temptation shall continue, which will be as long as the flesh continues, or any of us continue in the flesh. Nor did this watching begin with Christians. We find the Law of Nature had taught it *Jacob*, ere Law or Gospel came. He wrestles all night with the *Angel untill the breaking of the day*, Gen. xxxii. 24. and off he comes not without some marks, though not under the eye, yet under the thigh,

ver. 25. and he halts for it, ver. 31. yet a blessing he got by it, a new name of honour, the name of *Israel*, and the glory of prevailing with God and men, ver. 28. Go we on, and we shall find a course of watchers, such as by night stand in the house of the Lord, Psal. cxxxiv. 2. We shall find *David*, himself too, at his night watches, Psal. cxix. 48. often at them. Nay, even in his very bed, watching too, it seems, when we find him washing that, and watering his Couch with tears. St. Paul and Silas we hear offer that at their Prayers and Praises, whilst the dull heaviness of the night had lapt the rest of the World in sleep and silence, Acts xvi. 25. Yea, *Christ* himself whose holy body needed no such correctives we have many times at his mountain-devotion watching in them, St. Mar. i. 35. St. Mat. xiv. 23. St. Luke vi. 12. St. Luke xxi. 37. And all to give us good example, who so much need it, that we would put a penance upon our wandering eyes, watch this wild beast our body, (for it is no other) and make it tame (so they do wild beasts when they intend to tame them) and thereby frame it into a posture fit to entertain the Master at his coming; who can never come so much to our joy and comfort, as if he come and find us watching, find us thus markt in the eye with his own mark; Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching, St. Luke xii. 37.

But is there not (2.) a blessing belongs to fasting too? Sure, they are blessed that are not Castavvays, and fasting is a vway to keep us that vve be not such; if it but keep the body under, the soul vvill surely soar to heaven and dvvell among the blessed; and it is the second means vve have here pointed to us to keep that under by. It vvas one of St. Pauls in the fore-cited places, 2 Cor. vi. 5. and xi. 27. so proper to the purpose, that it is called an humbling of it, 1 Kings xxi. 29. an humbling of the very soul too, Hsal. xxxv. 13. a chastening of our selves, Psal. lxix. 10. vvell answering to the *Vulgar Latine castigo* here. Indeed, turn'd it vvas, the Prophet says, to his reproof, men laught at him for it (as they do still commonly at those that do so) yea, and the drunkards made Songs upon him for it. Yet do it he vvould for all that, he vvould not be jeer'd out of his Religion by any of the Wits, as they call them, any of the Pot-companions, or Trenchermen of them all. And I knovv not vvhy Christians, vvho are to pass through ill report as vvell as good, 2 Cor. vi. 8. should be so sensible of the scoffs of a profane buffoon as to be jeered out of their devotion by a little scurrilous froathy language any more than he. We have (1.) our Masters example for our fasting, even for the Fast vve are in, (if vve have leave vvith the *Ancients* to dravv it thence) for forty days together, St. Mat. iv. 2. We have (2.) his Precept and Prediction for fasting too, when he should be gone, St. Mar. ii. 20. We have (3.) his order and direction how to do it, St. Mat. vi. 18. When you fast do thus and thus. We have (4.) St. Paul telling us of a giving our selves to it, making a business of it, 1 Cor. vii. 5. We have (5.) all the Ages of our Christianity severely using it. We have (6.) here an excellent end of it, the keeping under of the body, and indeed that I need not prove; 'tis the fault we find with it, that it weakens the knees, and dries up the flesh, Psal. cix. 23. that it agrees not with our bodies. No more it should, that's the vertue of it. And it being of that vertue, and we having so good Example, so plain Precept, so sober direction, so strict practice, so long custom, to commend us to it; I know not where it sticks, that it is perform'd no better.

Indeed, were it for the destruction of the flesh, though that the Spirit might

might be saved by it, as the *Apostle* speaks, 1 *Cor.* v. 5. we might peradventure boggle at it; but it being only for the keeping it under rule and order, that the spirit may be sav'd, methinks we should not stick at it, at least not stickle against it. There are but two kinds of Fasts in Scripture, a total, and a partial; a total from all kind of meat till even, and that was *David's*, 2 *Sam.* iii. 23, a partial from some kinds only, and that was *Daniel's*, *Dan.* x. 3. from Flesh, and Wine, and pleasant Meats. For his three weeks mourning there, *ver.* 2. was his so long fasting, according to the *Hebrew* manner of expression, *Lugebam* for *jejunabam*: Neither of these so grievous, especially if but for a time; the latter of them mild and gentle. And if that will do it, if our abstinence from Flesh, and Wine, and Delicates will keep under the body, the *Church* (it may be) by reason of our weakness, will be content with that. Somewhat, sure, it will do towards it, and somewhat however should be done in the point. We should do all of us as much as we can, will do so too, if we think Saint *Paul* worth following, the soul worth saving, the being *castaways* worth preventing.

But besides this watching, and this fasting, there is a third way to keep our bodies under, by using them to some hardships and restraints. Will you see St. *Paul's* way, how he us'd his? you may in the forementioned places, 2 *Cor.* vi. 4, 5, 6, 8. and xi. 26, 27. He brings his up to labour and travel, to weariness and painfulness, to hunger and thirst, to cold and nakedness. And when we feel this beast of ours begin to kick, or lest it do so, we must take his way, keep it down with labour and employment, lash it hard, tire it out, and weary it with some busie work, make it sometimes feel cold, and pain (we will the better understand what the poor man feels, and the easier pitty him) keep it sometimes at least hungry and a dry; clothe it with course geer, break its sleeps, abate its provision, displease it in the diet, debar it sweet odours and perfumes, deprive it of the fine dresses, bring it out now and then in a mean garb, and fashion, and let it not continually please it self, but be forc'd sometimes to sad and displeasing objects, and to dwell upon them; to see, or feel, or do something or other that will afflict, and grieve it; that it may learn to know it self, and to submit. This is a third way, or rather many ways together, a part of the business of those antient *ασκήταις*, those severely Religious men of old, to bring it under. But when under it is, we must have a care also to keep it so, in subjection; an eye to *δουλαγωγῶν* as well as to *ὑποτάξεν*, to lead it away as the conquering combatant does his conquered Enemy for his Servant, or his Captive; for that's the true meaning of the word, and the second point of St. *Paul's* Discipline.

Now two ways there are to bring the body into this full subjection, after that by fasting, and watching, and some severities we have first got it down, and kept it under for a while. The one is Temperance, the other is Exercise: both us'd by those that strive for masteries, and taken up from them here by St. *Paul* in his spiritual combat with his body.

1. *They that strive for masteries are temperate in all things*, *ver.* 25. And he that will have the full mastery of his body, must possess it continually in temperance and sobriety, must *πάντα ἐν ἑαυτοῦ ἐξουσίᾳ*, get all into his power, and resolve not to be mastered either by a stragling eye, or a liquorish palate, or an unruly tongue, or a fond desire, or a foolish fashion, or an impetuous passion, or any importunate temptation, but make his body to foot and lackey it after his soul, and think it glory enough, that it may be allowed to serve it.

But

But to make it a good servant, we are also (2.) to exercise it; exercise it to do, and exercise it to suffer. *That* can neither δούλον ἄγειν, do like a servant; nor we ἡδιστοῦσθαι use it like one else, that cannot be a servant, or we masters else.

Exercise it then (1.) we must to do what we would have it; accustom it to obey, inure it to our commands, habituate it to Gods service, set it to good works, and ply it hard; tie it to order, and bind it to rule; bring it upon the knees, employ it continually in some acts of virtue, piety, or obedience, and let it never be idle.

Exercise it (2.) to suffer too. Use it to bear affronts, to put up indignities, to be crossed in the desires, to be thwarted in the ways, to be contraried in the sayings, to be disobeyed in the commands, to be diverted from the bent, to be mortified in the lusts, to be moderated in the passions, to be straitned in the liberties; to be delayed, put off, contradicted in all the motions of it: a way St. Paul takes pleasure in, 2 Cor. xii. 10. This is the way to subject the body thorowly, another part of the γυμνασία or ἀσκήσις of the holy men of the first ages, of the way they took to bring their bodies into order, and their souls to salvation; a way for us to lead the body captive to our will, to make an excellent servant of it too, that shall both help us up, and accompany us to heaven. For it is not to destroy it, 'tis not to trample on it, 'tis not to tyrannize, and triumph over it, but to bring it thither; not to hasten it to its Grave, but to conduct it into the seats of rest, that we use it thus; that we preach to you to watch, and fast, and be severe upon your selves, to be temperate in all things, and keep all this ado, 'tis only that, nor *that*, nor *we*; neither soul, nor body prove *castaways* at last. That's my second general, the ground and reason of keeping under the body, and bringing it into subjection. Left when *I have preached*, &c.

II. And a good reason too it is. Take the word ἀσκήσις *castaway*, how you will, it is so.

Take it first for such in the fight of men: we would do much, rather than be cast in their conceits. A good report is worth all the pains we speak of, necessary too to those that are to be employed in holy business, Acts vi. 3. 1 Tim. iii. 7. they should be men of good report: Certainly, our own doctrines should not reprove us, or we think it hard to do our selves what we require of others; 'tis a point of honour we may be allowed to stand on, not to be out-gone and cast by our own Scholars. And I must confess watching and fasting are two of the ways by which Saint Paul approves himself to be a Minister of God, 2 Cor. vi. 4. But this falls short of the *Apostles* meaning.

Take it (2.) for a *castaway* in the fight of God, for a *reprobate*, a wicked, an extremely wicked person: that's a second sense, and nearer *his*; the sense of ἀσκήσις, Rom. i. 28. Tit. i. 16. 2 Tim. iii. 8. and other places. And 'tis a thing we must take heed of: for if the body be not kept under, but let have its swing, wicked enough we may be quickly, and lest we grow so by it, a good reason, I think, to deal strictly and severely with it.

To be a *castaway* (3.) from the sight of God, that's a third acception of the word, and his fear indeed, to fall short of that incorruptible Crown he strives for, ver. 25. This best answers to the *Metaphor* he is in, of running, and fighting, and wrestling for the mastery, where 'tis not only reasonable, but necessary to take care that the body be in order, if we look to gain the prize: and we may well fear to lose all if it be not.

But

But what ? can this great *Saint* after he has been caught up into the third Heaven, fear any thing ? Can *he* be so poor spirited as to doubt of his salvation, and fear to be a *castaway* ? It seems, here he was, and that after that time he had been there ; as may appear by the time of writing the *Epistles*. He did not indeed much fear the *ὡς ἀσέκωμ*, 2 Cor. xiii. 7. to be reprobated by men, to be cast in their opinion, but for the *ἀσέκωμ* indeed, to be so by God, to be a *castaway* in *his*, lest his body should cast him into sin, and his sin cast him [of his reward], and he be cast so from the face of God, *that* fear he does. And if it be possible, after we are *once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and have been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and of the [very] powers of the world to come,* after that to fall away, (and we find it is so, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.) 'Tis time for all of us to fear, to *pass the whole time of our sojourning here in it* too, as St. Peter counsels us, 1 Pet. i. 17. and good reason we have to do all we can possible to prevent it ; not spare our bodies, if we can so save our souls from being *castaways*.

2. Especially having *μὴ πῶς* next, so much ground to fear it ; seeing there are many ways to be so, for lest by any may suppose many, by some or other of which we may miscarry. Shall I name you some, and not wholly out of the Text, (1.) The frailties of our nature. 'Tis a body here we have to deal with: The multitude (2.) of temptations ; some things there are suppos'd too here, may some way or other get the power over it, if we look not to it. The uncertainty (3.) of the strongest titles that we hold by, this very *I* in the Text it seems a very *Apostle* may be a *castaway*, else why does he set this *lest* upon it. The very manner of the working (4.) of Grace it self, that this *I* must give its help, any other way it will not do it. Our bodies we may fear they want keeping under, temptations we may fear, they may *ὑλαγωγῶν*, lead them away. This very *I*, as great as he is, may be led away too, and overcome. And the grace of God it seems will not hinder it but by the ordinary way of our working with it. All which may tell us, St. Paul fears all (2.) upon good ground, fears not being *cast away* for nothing, fears these very grounds we are to speak of. And,

The frailty of nature, that (1.) may well be fear'd : so much flesh there is about us, and so little spirit ; a weak, and yet unruly body ; where there are so many natural weaknesses, so many acquired infirmities, so many necessities hang upon us, so much dulness, so much perverseness, so much disorder in all our powers, that I cannot but wonder that any should be so fool-hardy as not to fear, where there are so many in-lets, and out-lets, so many windows and posterns, so many gaps and breaches, and easie batterings, and easier underminings, to let in the enemy.

But (2.) bring up now the forces that are laid against it, the strong enticements and allurements, the hopes, the fears, the desires, the joys, the sorrows that on this or that side do continually assault it ; the innumerable occasions, the infinite opportunities that are against it : and who is it that dares think to withstand them all.

Add thirdly the strongest titles, that we hold by, and we have yet a cause to fear ; Saints, and Servants, and Sons, and Heirs, and being *sealed to the day of Redemption*, these and all those happy names and interests besides we read of, cannot put us above fear. Servants may be turned away, Saints may turn sinners ; Sons may be cast off ; Heirs may be disinherited, Seals may be broken up, Elect we are no further than good works,

works, created, ordained, predestinated no further, *Eph. i. 4, 5. and ii. 10.* and good works I am sure have uncertainty enough, *Verebar omnia, Job* fear'd the best of them, nothing will more assure us than this godly fear.

Nay, add we lastly the very way of the working of Gods Graces in us, and yet we have reason to fear still. We are told indeed by some, his Grace is irresistible; but God knows we find it otherwise. Why does *S. Stephen* tell us else that we resist the *Holy Ghost*, *Acts vii. 51.* or *St. Paul*, with us not to quench the Spirit, if we cannot do it, *1 Thess. v. 19.* Do it alas? we do too often. One there was that said he should never be removed; God of his goodness had made his Hill so strong: Yet remov'd he quickly was, fell, and fell foully too; and had he not wept and chastened himself to purpose, had lain low enough for ever, for all his Hill so strong. *Nemo tantâ est firmitate suffultus, ut de stabilitate suâ debeat esse securus*, says *St. Aug. Ser. 72.* Who can look upon *Noahs* Drunkenness, *Lots* Drunkenness and Incest, *David's* Adultery and Murther, *Solomon's* Carnality and Idolatry; *Adam's* fall in *Paradise*, and the *Angels* in Heaven it self, and not fear his own, poor, easie, brittle earth. We may well fear being *castaways* upon such grounds as these, and fear the very grounds that thus sink under us; not only the sad upshot at the last, but the means that bring us to it, all the way.

3. But besides, if there be no way of keeping from being *castaways* without this keeping under of the body, if all our preaching, and our great doings will not do without it, we have a third reason to fear our selves, and set seriously about it. For if *St. Paul* here (3.) not only fear his being a *castaway*, and fear that by some means he may come to it, but fear also that all means besides this harshness towards his body will scarcely hinder it; if after all his preaching from *Jerusalem* round about unto *Ilyricum*, his preaching *gratis* too, after all his labours, all his sufferings, all his persecutions upon the Gospel score, he fears yet that the best he has done else, the best he can do else will not save him for all his haste: where are our great assurers of themselves and others of Heaven and Glory? Why? 'tis not our preaching, 'tis not our praying, 'tis not our prophesying, 'tis not our doing wonders neither, even to the casting out of Devils that can save us from being cast out our selves at last, with a *Non novi*, the sad sentence of *I never knew you depart from me*, *St. Mat. viii. 23.* Indeed we have so little reason to be confident that we shall not be *castaways*, by reason of any of those performances, that our very preaching, or prophesying, as we call it, nay, and praying too, may bring us to it. We may preach Rebellion, Heresies, and Schisms, nay, and pray them too (some have done so long) and so preach away both our selves and others. Nay, though we preach others into Heaven, we may preach out our selves. We may preach freely, and preach constantly, and preach long, and preach sound doctrine too; preach with the tongues of *Angels*, and yet prove Devils at the last, grow proud upon it; light others up to Heaven, and yet go down to Hell our selves; shine gloriously for a blaze, and go out in a stench, have our *δίκμος* here, and be *ἀδικμος* for ever, have our reward and glory here, and be cast away for ever.

And now, if the strongest *Cedars* shake, what shall the *Reeds* do? If the first preachers of the Gospel, the *grand Apostles*, those Stars and Angels of the *Churches* stand so trembling, and must deal so roughly with their bodies, for fear of being *castaways*, who is it can dream himself ex-

empt? unless ye mortifie the deeds of the body, ('tis to all of us it is said so, *Rom. viii. 13.*) there is no living. If we keep not our bodies low, they will keep *us* low, if we bring not them into subjection, they will bring *us* into slavery; they will cast us away, if we cast away too much upon them. There's no way to cure our fears, to confirm our hopes, to help our weaknesse, to beat back temptations, to establish our titles, and rights to Heaven, to make Gods Grace effectual upon us; to sanctifie our prayers, and preachings, and all our labours, to the glory of a reward, but to watch, and fast, and deal severely with our bodies; to study temperance, and exercise our selves to do and suffer hard things. 'Tis no will-worship, surely, (as men brand it) that is prest and practis'd here under so great danger of being *castaways* if we do it not: it is not sure. Nor is it so hard a business as men would seem to make it. None of all the ways I told you of for the subduing of the body, are so at all. We can sit up whole nights to Game, to Dance, to Revel, to see a Mask or play; make nothing of it. We can rise up early, and go to bed late for months together, for our gain, and profit, and be never the worse: We can fast whole days together, and nor eat, nor drink, when we are eager upon our business, or sport, and never feel it. We can endure pain, and cold, and tendance, affronts, and injuries, and neglects, slights and reproaches too, to compass a little honour and preferment, and not say a word. We can be temperate too when we please, for some ends and purposes. Only the souls business is not worth the while; whether *castaways* or no is not considerable; all's too much on that accompt: Molehills are Mountains, and there is a Lion always in the way: watching will kill us, fasting will destroy us, any kind of strictness will impair us; temperance it self will pine us into *Skeletons*; every good exercise takes up too much time, every petty thing that crosses but the way is an inconquerable difficulty, a Lion, when the souls business is to be gone about. Hear but St. *Austin* chide you, as once he chid himself, *Tu non poteris quod ista, & ista & ista*, What, says he, *canst not thou do that which so many weak and tender women, so many little Children, so many of all sexes, ages, and conditions, have so often done before thee, and thought so easie?* 'Tis a shame to say so.

But suppose thou art infirm indeed, and canst not do so much as perhaps thou wouldst do else, canst thou do nothing? If thou canst not watch, canst thou not fast sometimes? If thou canst not fast, canst thou not endure a little hunger, thirst, or cold, or pains for Heaven neither? If all these seem hard, canst thou not be temperate neither? canst thou not bring thy self to it by degrees, by exercise, and practice neither? Or if thou canst not watch a night, canst thou not watch an hour, do somewhat towards it? if thou canst not fast from all kind of meat, canst thou not abstain at least from some; from dainties and delicates? If not often, canst thou not at such a time as this, when all Christians ever used to do it? Sure he that cannot fast a meal, may yet feed upon courser fare: He that cannot do any of these long, may do all of them some time; may exercise himself in a little time to the hardest of them all. Let's then however set a doing somewhat: for God's sake let's be Christians, a little at the least; let's do somewhat that is a kin to the antient piety, watch, or fast, or somewhat, in some degree or other; that the world may believe that we are Christians. Why should we be *castaways* from the *profession* too?

But indeed, he that will do nothing for fear of being a *castaway* in the

Text,

Text, I despair he should do any thing upon any other concernment. He that ualues his body above his soul, his ease and pleasure above Heaven, his temporal satisfaction above his eternal salvation ; there is no more to be said of him, if St. *Paul* say true, he must be a *castaway*.

I am too long, but I must not end with so sad a word. All that has been said or preacht, is not that any should be, but that not any should be *castaways*, only lest they should: 'Tis in our own hands to hinder it. 'Tis but a few hours taken from our sleep, and employed on Heaven. 'Tis but a little taken from our full Dishes, and groaning Tables, and gorged Stomachs, taken from our own bodies, and bestowed upon the poors. 'Tis but a little strictness to our bodies that sets all strait. 'Tis but the keeping the body under, and the soul in awe, and all is safe. The keeping down the body now, shall raise up both soul and body at the last ; the holy fear of being *castaways* shall keep you safe from ever being so, the bringing the body into subjection here, shall bring it hereafter into a Kingdom, where all our fears shall be turned into joys, our feasting into fasting, our watching into rest, all our hardships into ease and pleasure, and these very corruptible bodies here kept under, shall be there exalted into incorruption, where we shall meet the full reward of all our pains and labours ; we of our preaching, you of your hearing ; all of us of all the good works we have done, all the sufferings that we shall suffer, the everlasting Crown of Righteousness, the incorruptible and eternal Crown of Glory.

Which he give us at that day, who expects such things from us in these days, to approve us at that, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To whom be all glory, &c.

A
S E R M O N
O N T H E
Third Sunday in Lent.

R O M. viii. 21.

*What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed ?
For the end of those things is death.*



Those things were sins and sinful courses: These words an Argument to dissuade from them. St. Pauls great Argument to dissuade from sin, and the service of it. An Argument then which there can be no greater: nothing be said more, or more home against it. Nothing more against it, than that nothing comes of it but shame and ruine; nothing more home, than that which comes home to our own bosoms, makes our selves the Judges, our own consciences and experiences the Umpires of the business. *What fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?* says our Apostle, Ye your selves tell me if you can.

What had ye then? says he to the Romans here. What have ye, now say I to you, ye, who ere you are still, or what had ye ever, any of you, who have at any time given up your members to uncleanness, or to any iniquity? What have ye gotten by it? Bring in your Accompt, set down the Income, reckon up the gains, sum up the Expences and Receipts, and tell me truly what it is. Or if you be ashamed to tell it, give the Apostle leave to do it. *Fruit* ye had none of it, that's certain. *Shame* ye have by it; that's too sure: and *death* you shall have if you go on in it, nothing surer; *for the end of those things is death.* What reason then to commit or continue in them? That's St. Pauls meaning by the question; as if he had said: Ye have no reason in the world at all to pursue a course so fruitless, so dishonourable, so desperate, as your selves have found, and will still find your sins to be.

Thus the *Text*, you see, is a dissuasive from sin and all unrighteousness, drawn here from these four Particulars: (1.) The fruitlessness and unprofitableness. (2.) The shame and dishonour. (3.) The mischief and damage of it. And (4.) our own experience of them all. The unprofitableness in the enjoyment, the shame in the remembrance, the damage

damage in the conclusion of every sin, and our own experience call'd in to witness to it.

The unprofitableness (1.) without fruit; *what fruit had ye?* That is, no fruit had ye, none at all. There's the fruitlessness of sin, none for the time past.

None (2.) for the present, nothing but what *ye are now* ashamed of, there's the shame and dishonour of sin.

None (3.) for the future neither, unless it be death; there's the damage of sin, no fruit past, present, or to come but *shame and death*.

And all this *ye* know, says St. Paul, as well as I. I appeal to your selves, and your own experience, *what fruit had ye?* I dare stand to your own confessions. I dare make your selves the judges.

Now sum up the Argument and thus it runs. Were there any profit, O ye Romans, in your trade of sin, I might perhaps be thought too hard to press so much upon you to persuade you from it. Or though there were no profit, yet (2.) if there were some credit in it, something perhaps might be said for your continuance in it. Or though there were neither profit nor credit for the present, yet if (3.) there were some good might issue from it for the future, or at least the issue not so bad as death, somewhat peradventure might be pleaded in the case. Or if this (4.) were all only in other mens opinions, and ye found it otherwise your selves, ye might perchance have some excuse at least to go on in sin; but to sin when there is neither profit, nor credit, nor hope, nothing good at any time in it, neither when 'tis past, nor while 'tis present, nor any yet to come; but all contrary, and we our selves can witness it by sad experience (for to our own souls and consciences the Apostle here refers it, that so it is) when we can shew no good of what we have done, are but *ashamed* of that which can be shewn, and can see nothing but *death* and destruction at our heels; after all this to sin still, to sin again, any sin again, we have as little wit one would think in it as *fruit* of it, as much senselessness as *shame*, and are like to make but a sad *end* when all is done. It would be otherwise would we sit down and think upon it. Ye are set already, set but your thoughts and hearts to ponder and consider what is here set before you, the fruitlessness, the shame, the damage of sin, and your own experiences of them all, and I shall not doubt but you will make the Application St. Paul would have you of the Text; no longer yield your selves servants unto unrighteousness, or commit those things whereof ye cannot but presently be ashamed, and be next door to be confounded. Consider we then, first, the fruitlessness or unprofitableness of sin, see what that will work upon us. *what fruit had ye then, &c.*

what fruit? That is, no fruit; for so such kind of Questions commonly are resolved into the strongest Negatives. No fruit, then, St. Paul means, can be shew'd of sin: For all fruit is either profitable for use, or pleasurable to the taste, or at least delightful to the sight. But sin is none of these; Nothing so unprofitable, so distasteful, so ugly and unseemly as sin is; so, nothing so fruitless.

For profitable fruit (1.) there is none in sin. Let's call those profitable and advantageous sins, as men imagine them, of fraud, covetousness, and sacrilege to a reckoning, and see what comes in by them. Our common Proverb tells us, *Covetousness brings nothing home. The poor and the*

the deceitful man meet together, says the sacred *Proverb*, *Prov. xxix. 13.* Even in this sense true, that the Deceiver cheats himself, and grows poor by his own deceit; they meet together thus. The *Prophet Haggai* says, 'tis but *put into a bag with holes*, that is taken, or kept back, or but spar'd from the House of God, *Hag. i. 6.* Says *Solomon* too, 'Tis a snare to the man who devoureth that which is holy, things dedicated to Gods service, *Prov. xx. 25.* And is all the fruit of it, all the fruit of Sacrilege come to that, to a snare, or to a halter? Little got by that. But whether to that or no, to a curse it comes, *Mal. iii. 9.* *Ye are cursed with a curse*, even no less than a whole Nation by it; grown tatter'd and poor upon it; so far are they from a blessing or enriching by it, because 'tis Gods blessing only that truly makes us rich, *Prov. x. 22.* and all that is called riches but a curse without it. But suppose this sin, or any other, got what it could desire, even the whole World, as wide, and full, and glorious as it is, yet *what shall it profit a man*, though, says *Christ*, *St. Mark viii. 36.* What fruit has he of it all? Less far than *He*, that shall sell all he has or hopes, for the point of a Pin, or the leg of a Spider. *He shall not so much as rost that which he has got with all his hunting*, is as true of him as of the slothful man, *Prov. xii. 27.* Of all the fruit that he has gathered he has not, it seems, so much as to fill his belly. But if he should eat of it till his guts crackt, he would not thrive upon it; no thriving for body or estate when the soul is lost, for that thriving is worse than nothing.

Well, yet, if there be no profitable fruit of sin, is there (2.) no pleasurable neither? Just as little. Examine we the most sensual and delightful sins; and *they* it must be, if any; yet not *they*. Drunkenness, that great voluptuous sin, will you behold the goodly fruit it brings? (For profit it brings none) let the *wise man* satisfy you, *Prov. xxiii. 29.* *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long* (says he) *at the wine, they that go to seek mixt wine.* Woe, and sorrow, and contentions, and reproach, and wounds, and sad mourning eyes at last are the fair fruits and issues of this rare pleasurable wickedness; and sure there's no pleasure in any of these. Nay, even what it pretends to most it misses. The very wine, as sweet as it relishes at the first, bites at last, says *Solomon*, *like a Serpent, and stings like an Adder*, *ver. 32.* little pleasure of all its former sweetnesses. And as little in any other of those sins of sense which claim most to it. The fruit of Gluttony, what is it, but dulness, and unwieldiness, gripings, vomitings, and colicks, surfets, aches, and diseases? Of Lust, what but rottenness in the very bones and marrow? Our very vanities tire and clog us, and make us peevish at every trifle; Spiritual wickednesses have less pleasure. Envy and malice are their own tormentors. Pride cannot so much as please it self. Ambition is rackt with fears, distracted with visits, and crucified daily with its own greatness; that little-inconsiderable point they intitle pleasure in any of these is no sooner nam'd than it is gone, and seldom is where the name is given it. But where at the highest, so intermixt it is with bitterness and sorrow, that you cannot discern it, or so quickly follow'd with them, that 'tis forgotten in a moment. Nay, that sin which seems now adays to have all the profit, pleasure, and beauty in it, Schism and Division upon the examination will find none. They that make Divisions among you, says *St. Paul*, they do but *serve their own belly*, *Rom. xvi. 18.* And *God shall destroy both it and them*, *1 Cor. vi. 13.* What's gotten then? Whatever it is, the Kingdom of Heaven

is lost by it, *Gal. v. 21.* where's then the profit, pleasure, or beauty of it.

But though there be neither profit nor pleasure, no such fruits, is there (3.) no beauty neither, no fair fruits in sin to look upon ? Are there not so much as the fruits of *Sodom* (they tell us of) goodly and and fair to see to without, though dust and ashes all within ? No, not so much as such. Look again upon the Drunkard, see him in his cups and revels, and what see you there but a strange disfigured countenance, staring eyes, disordered gestures, words, and looks, and actions, all disguised, ugly, and deformed ? Behold next the lascivious Wanton in but the addressee to his great sin, his antick postures, his affected follies, his empty discourses, his religious (I should say irreligious) approaches to his adored Idoll, (to say nothing of the sin it self that darkness covers) and tell me, if you can, what is handsom in any of his applications. View, thirdly, the passionate, fierce, and angry man, and what is there lovely in his flaming eyes, his furrowed brows, his distracted looks, his frantick carriage, in his loud rantings and raving furies ? Call ye the pale and meager look of the envious or malicious comely ? Is the high carriage of the proud or ambitious pleasing ? Is the close and fowre visage of the covetous person lovely ? Nay, has not the face of every sinner surprized in his sin, or afterward reflecting on it, a kind of guilt and horror that sensibly discomposes and disorders it ? *Then* (and that *then* is in the *Text*) *then* to be sure you will find all things in that disorder, you must be vain to expect any thing handsome or lovely there. Sin it self is nothing else but a deordination, or swerving from order and beauty. *Bonum* and *pulchrum* are convertible : That only which is truly good is truly fair, and that again only truly fair which is truly good. 'Tis the fault of our eyes if we see otherwise. For if sin were lovely God would love it : but he hates nothing so much, nothing, indeed, but it. Sin is *that* only from whence all ugliness and deformity in things or actions. Where-soever is deformity, or whatsoever is deformed, 'tis sin that caused it, or sin that is it.

And is not sin now, think you, a lovely piece, that thus disorders the Universe, and deforms the whole Creation ? That brings neither pleasure, nor profit, nor honour with it to its unhappy servants ? 'Tis an evil and bitter thing, says the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Jer. ii. 19.* There is no pleasure in it. *They*, that commit it, do but hatch Cockatrices eggs, and weave the Spiders web, says the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Isa. lix. 5.* There's no profit in it. For he that eateth of their Eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a Viper. Their webbs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works ; they, whose works are works of iniquity, *ver. 6.* What fruits, I pray, are these ? Or will you call them fruits ? If you will, it may be I may help you to some more such, groping for the wall as if you had no eyes ; stumbling at the noon day as in the night ; roaring fore like bears, and mourning like doves, in the fore-cited *Chapter*, *Isa. lix. 10. 11.* Blindness, and weakness, and sorrow, and mourning, even to roaring, horrors, and stings of conscience in abundance, and inability to do good, or help our selves, such fruits as these you may have enow. Our *Apostle* tells us besides of a sad slavery it brings us to, *ver. 17.* The *Psalmist* of a rain of snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest, that falls upon the sinner by it, *Psal. xi. 7.* Crosses and afflictions, punishments and judgments we every where read to be the issues of it. In Gods hot displeasure, and mans scorn, and even, in the very next words, shame also, are the only fruits

fruits (if we will allow them that name) of those *unfruitful works of darkness*, as *St. Paul* justly stiles them, *Eph. v. 11.*

Well may we now, with him, ask, *what fruits have ye*, or ever had ye in such things as those ? What at all, or what worth, if any at all, from those kinds of courses ? Nay, what *then* had ye ? What had you in the very enjoying, in the very transactions of your sins ? Did they either satisfy or content you fully even then ? Were ye not either first tired with the pursuit, or fell much short of your expectations, or distasted by some circumstances, or unsatisfied presently when you had accomplish'd your unhappy and wretched work ? But what however have ye now left of any of them but the shame ? Call it what ye will, that ye have gotten by the most advantageous or pleasing wickedness, say as well of it as you can, give us but leave to discover and rifle it to your faces, and your blushing cheeks, and down-cast eyes, and disordered answers, and vain subterfuges and excuses will witness to your teeth that 'tis nothing but what ye are now next, indeed, ashamed of.

II. And shame now (2.) is the next Property of sin we are to speak of, the true genuine Issue of it. For no sooner had *Adam* tasted the forbidden fruit and sinn'd, but both he and his co-partner are both presently ashamed, and run away to hide themselves among the Thickets of the *Garden*. Oh ! how they blush to look upon one another when they had once but eaten, done what they should not ! the die and colour of the forbidden fruit had got presently into their faces, they are ashamed of themselves, though there were none but themselves in the World to see them. O whither should they run, what should they do to cover their nakedness and their shame ? Nakedness was no shame at first till sin came on it, but then they are ashamed even of their nature, so strange a confusion had one single sin brought with it. Nor could all the fig leaves of *Paradise*, nor all the shades of the trees and bushes, nor the shadows of the approaching Evening cover their new-risen blushes, nor the cool of it allay the heat that raised them in their faces. Shame and sin are inseparable companions ; there is no parting them. *Shame* (1.) to be seen of God ; they run from him ; the saddest effect that can be, that so parts and hurries us from our Maker as far as possibly we can go. *Shame* (2.) to be seen of men : We dare not look upon one another when we have sinned and are discovered. *Shame* (3.) to look upon our selves ; we presently get what fig-leaves we may, make what excuses we can imagine to cover our own weakness and infirmity. *Shame* (4.) to be seen by any Creature, afraid, as it were, of every whisk of wind, every stirring of a bush, ashamed any creature should come nigh us, for fear it should laugh at our folly, deride our infirmity, trample upon our weakness, scorn our acquaintance, and despise our authority, if it should once behold the deformity of our sin.

Thus shame from the very first prest close upon the heels of sin. And ask the most impudent sinner still, him whom custom has made insensible, and whose face continual sinning has braz'd and harden'd against the tenderness of a blush, yet ask him, I say, why he yet seeks corners for the accomplishment of his sin, or the contrivance of his wicked Plots. Why does he not act it without doors, and before the Sun ? Why, when he has done it with the highest hand, and needs not fear a contradiction, or a power to controul or punish him, why he varnishes over his wickedness with false colours, and glosses all his actions either with the name of Piety and Religion, Reformation and Purity, Justice and Integrity,

Conscience

Conscience, and I know not what. Why he sometimes excuses it with necessity, sometimes extenuates it with infirmity, sometimes pleads ignorance, false information or mistake, sometimes makes one pretence, sometimes another. Does he not evidently and plainly tell you by so doing, he is even ashamed of the things that he has done, though he bear it out with all the confidence he can? He cannot utterly cast off shame, though he has done shamefacedness. We may confidently say to him, Those very things thou even seem'st to glory in, thou art really no other than ashamed of.

Now there is a three-fold shame, a natural, a virtuous, and a penal shame: a shame that naturally and even against our wills attends every unhandsome action. A godly shame (2.) that should always follow upon it. And (3.) a shame that will else ere long pursue it.

The first, or natural, is that which through the modesty of nature, not yet habituated to the impudence of wickedness, rises ere we are aware, from the guilt and foulness of sin, either discovered or feared to be so. That's the reason that *the eye of the Adulterer waiteth for the twilight*, Job xxiv. 15. to hide his reproach. That the Drunkard us'd in former times (though now grown gallant on it) to be *drunk in the night*, 1 Thess. v. 7. being ashamed (as civility went then) to be seen so disguised in the day: That the Heretick and Schismatick us'd in the *Apostles* times (though now grown confident) to come creeping into Widows houses, and hide themselves behind Curtains and Aprons, ashamed of their Schisms, and new Doctrines at the first, 2 Tim. iii. 6. That still the Thief by night, and the fly Cheat, and covetous Extortioner by underhand dealing in the day strive to conceal the designs and practices which only night and darkness are thought fit to cover, or give a tolerable shadow too. Even our vanities within a while make us ashamed of them. We are within a few days in a huge confusion to be seen in our finest Clothes, and newest Fashions we were the other day so proud of, rather naked than in a fashion that has another grown upon it. Indeed, when any of our sins, great, or little, take hold upon us; then as the *Prophet David* professes we are not able to look up, *Psal.* xl. 15. so ashamed they make us. None but *Absalom*, none but the wickedest sons of Rebellion sin upon the house top, at noon day all the people looking on. Yet even for all that, there must be a Tent, even for such as he, some thin Veil or other; some Silk, or linen Scarf or Curtain to cover his wickedness in the upshot, 2 Sam. xvi. 22. So natural a fruit and companion is shame to any sin or sinner. Sin is more than sin, when shame is gone, when that is lost.

2. Yet if so be this kind of modest shame should be laid asleep awhile, through the custom and habit of a sin, there is a second sort of shame that must be thought on; the shame that accompanies repentance: Sin must have repentance, and repentance will have shame. Yea, what shame? what, or how great, I cannot tell you; but shame it must work, if it be true: Shame of our ingratitude to God, shame of our unhandsoness to men, shame of the disparagement we have done our nature, shame of the dishonour we have done our selves in committing things so foul, so brutish, so unreasonable: this the properest of the three shames we mentioned to this place, which it seems the *Romans* were here come to; and is a business we are obliged to, to repent us, and be ashamed of our sins, to be ashamed and blush with *Ezra* to lift up our faces, because our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespasses grown up into the Heavens, *Ezra* ix. 6.

3. And if this we be not, there is another-gates shame will overtake us; shame (3.) and confusion of face: if we be not ashamed of our sins, we shall e're long be ashamed for them; come to shame and dishonour by them: such a kind of shame as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of, *Isa. i. 29. Ye shall be ashamed of the Oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens which ye have chosen;* your very enemies shall laugh you to scorn; the very Oaks and Trees shake their heads at you in derision, your Gardens bring you forth no other fruit. All that pass by shall wag their heads, and hiss at you, *Fer. xix. 8. Ye shall be a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing, and a reproach to all Nations, Fer. xxix. 18. and a shameful spewing shall be on your glory, Hab. ii. 16.* To this our ill courses will bring us at the last; and yet to worse, even to death too. For the end of those things is death: that's the third Particular, the third Argument against sin, the mischief and damage of it in the end, and comes next to be consider'd.

III. A sad end truly, and but sorry wages for all the pains and drudgery that sins put us to. St. Paul here thinks it not worth the name of fruit. Yet what fruit sin brings, if you will call it fruit, 'tis unto death, *Rom. vii. 5.* But if there were any other, death so nigh at heels would devour it all. Sin when it is finished, when 'tis at the height, compleat and perfected, it bringeth forth death, says St. James i. 15. that's the end God knows. And a threefold death it brings; a temporal, a spiritual, and an eternal death.

For the first, *Thou shalt die the death*, was threatned to it before it came into the world, *Gen. ii. 17.* And no sooner came it, but death came by it, death by sin, *Rom. v. 12.* And it pass thence upon all men, too. All men ever since have been subjected to it. All have died, and all must die for that one sin. Ever after that first sinful morsel all are become like the beasts that perish, *Psal. xlix. 12.* So that the wisest of men had much ado to distinguish between their ends, *Eccles. iii. 19, 20.* As the one dieth, says he, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast. All go unto one place, all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Only indeed, a little after, *ver. 21.* he perceives a kind of glimmering as it were of the humane Spirits going upward: yet with this lessening, for all that, of who knoweth it? who can certainly demonstrate, and distinguish, and define the difference? so deeply has sin engaged us unto death, that there is no escaping; and the shadows of it are so great, that there is no discovering of differences in the Grave between the ashes of a man, and of a Beast.

2. But there is (2.) a death before this; a death of the soul before the death of the body; and the much worser of the twain. The teeth of Sin, says the Son of Syrach, are as the teeth of a Lion, slaying the souls of men, *Ecclus. xxi. 2.* the very souls. The separation of the body from the soul, which is the temporal death, is but a trifle to the separation of the soul from God, which is the spiritual. This sin brings upon the soul in the very act, if it rather be not it it self: the very act of sin commits the murder, and slays the soul, whilst it is in doing. Ζῶντι τεθνήκε, says the Apostle of the voluptuous Widow that lives in sin, or pleasure, she is dead whilst she is alive, *1 Tim. v. 6.* A meer walking carcase a sinner is, a meer motion and engine without life, and spirit, when Gods Spirit and Grace (as by sin it does) is departed from him. The fall of the body into the dust of the Grave, is nothing so bad as the fall of the soul into the dirt of sin. When our souls are but once deprived of Grace, and
Good-

Goodness, Gods presence so taken from us; they do but wither, and dwindle, and die away; and we only walk like so many Ghosts among the Graves, in the shades of night and darkness. Did we but consider or understand how miserably the soul crawls along in this condition, when the eternal Spirit is departed from it, seal'd up as it were by her transgressions, in the grave of a customary wickedness; adding still one iniquity to another, wholly insensible of any good, as the dead body: we would say the natural death were nothing like it, the Grave but a bed of rest and sleep, whilst sin were the very torments of death it self. Nay, the very pangs, and horrors of death that make way to it but little flea-bitings to the stings and terrors of Conscience, that often follow upon our sins, upon the loss of Gods favour and presence.

And yet there is a third death worse than both these; eternal Death: from the two former we may rise again. The dust will one day breath again, and the soul after the departure of Gods Spirit may again retrieve it and recover; but once within the regions of eternal death, and there forever. Body lost, and Soul lost, and God lost for ever. An end indeed, without an end; an end of good, but no end of evil; where the worm is ever dying, yet ever gnawing; the fire dark as the most dismal night, yet ever burning; the body eternally separated from all the comforts of the soul, yet the soul ever in it: the soul for all eternity cast out of the land of the living, separated irreconcilably from Gods presence, the only fountain of joy, and life, and being, and yet continually and everlastingly, feeling the horrors of this intolerable parting from him. *Go ye cursed into everlasting fires*, is the sentence long since past upon the ungodly, and the sinner by our *Blessed Saviour*; St. *Matth.* xxv. 41. The very Heathen, notwithstanding the ignorance they were in, they were not ignorant of this, that *they that commit such things are worthy of death*, so says the *Apostle*, *Rom.* i. 32. And be the sinner who it will, and be his way never so plain and easie, never so specious, yet *at the end thereof is the pit of Hell*, says the son of *Syrach*, *Eccles.* xxi. 10.

He that now promises himself any better end of his sins, or sinful courses, he that flatters and feeds himself with any other end of his Ambition, or his Treason, of his Faction or his Sedition, of his Covetousness, or his Sacrilege, of his uncleanness, or his injustice, or any other sin (I name no more, for I leave every one to reckon up his own) he that flatters himself, I say, with any other end of any of them to make himself forget this, does but deceive himself, and fool away his soul beyond recovery. Here's all the fruit he is like to get, the only end he will certainly find at last, everlasting Death; an end without an end, without any thing in life to sweeten the approaches of death, without any thing in death, fruit, or leaves to garnish up the Chambers of the Grave, or any bud of hope to allay the misery and sadness of it. And we need no other witness of all this, neither of the little or no fruit, nor of the great and horrid shame, nor of the vast and miserable ruine that comes of sin, but our own selves. *what had ye?* says our *Apostle*, ye can shew no fruit; *ye are now asham'd*, and ye cannot be ignorant that death is coming on. I here refer it to you, say what you can in the behalf of it; I desire none other witnesses, nor judges, than your selves. *what fruit had ye then in those things whereof you are now asham'd*: tell me if you can.

IV. Indeed, there is none can tell so well as the sinner can himself what he has gotten by his sin; whether we consider him as one reflecting upon his ways, only as a person of reason should, or else as a Christian will.

For (1.) let any of us, as men of reason, lay together the weary steps, the hard adventures, the vexatious troubles, the ordinary disappointments, the impertinent visits, the thoughtful nights, the busie days, the tumultuous uproars of our fears, our jealousies, our hopes, our despairs; the unworthy condiscentions, the base disparagements, the dishonourable enterprizes, that a lust, that a humour, that a vanity puts us to, or puts upon us: and then compare them with the lightness, the shortness, the unprofitableness, the unsatisfactoriness, the eternal shame and confusion we yet after all purchase, with all that toil; and we must both needs confess, that we have done brutishly and unreasonably, and cannot but be asham'd we have so unman'd our selves, and betrayed the very essence and glory of our nature: not done like men.

But (2.) let us renew the same reflections, and view them over again by the light of Grace; look upon our selves as Christians thus wretchedly betraying our God for a Lust, Christ for an Interest, our Religion for a Fancy, our obedience for a Humour, our Charity for a Ceremony, our Peace for a Punctilio, our duty to God and man, for a little vain applause of peradventure ungodly men; our Innocence for Dirt and Pleasure, our eternal Glory and Salvation for Toys and Trifles; and will we not without more ado confess we are asham'd, infinitely asham'd of it? Hear but those brave ranting blades, those gallant sinners, *Wisdom* v. 8. what they say themselves, *what hath pride profited us*, say they, or *what good have riches with our vaunting brought us?* as if in sum they had said, what have all our sins procured us? *why, all those are passed away like a shadow*, ver. 9. and we are *consumed in our own wickedness*, ver. 13. Now indeed, though there too late, they begin to talk like men, to speak reason.

The Christian penitent, after he has run the course of sin, and is now returning, talks somewhat higher, calls it a Prison, the Stocks, the Dungeon, the very nethermost Hell; thinks no words bad enough to stile it by. We need not put any such upon the rack for this confession, they go mourning and sighing it all the day long, they tell you sensibly by their tears and blushes, by their sad countenances, and down-cast looks, by their voluntary confessions, their willing restraints now put upon themselves, their pining, punishing, afflicting of their souls and bodies, their wards and watches now over every step, lest they should fall again, that never were any poor souls so gull'd into a course, so vain, so unprofitable, so dishonourable, so full of perplexities, so fruitful of anxieties, so bitter, so unpleasant as sin has been, nor any thing whereof they are so much asham'd. No fruit of all you see, even our selves being judges.

And yet I will not send you away without some fruit or other; somewhat after all this, that may do you good.

For methinks if sin have no better fruits, if wickedness come no better off, we may first learn to be asham'd, and blush to think of it, be asham'd of sin.

We may (2.) learn to beat it off thus at its first assaults. What, thou sin, thou lust, what fruit shall I have in thee? what good shall I reap of thee? Do I not see shame attend thee, and death behind thee? I am asham'd already to think upon thee: away, away, thou impudent solicitors, I love no such fruit, I love no such end.

And if (3.) we be so unhappy as to be at any time unawares engaged in any sin, let us strike off presently upon the arguments of the *Text*. For why should we be so simple, to take a course that will not profit, to take pains to weave a web that will not cover us, to plant trees that will
yield

yield no fruit, to range after fruit that has no pleasure, to court that which has no loveliness? If we can expect nothing from our sins (as you have heard we cannot) why do we sweat about them? if they bring home nought but shame, why are we not at first ashamed to commit them? if they end in death, why will ye die, O foolish people and unwise?

Lastly, you that have led a course of sin, and are yet perhaps still in it, sit down and reckon every one of you with himself, what you have gotten. *Imprimis*, So much cost and charges, *Item*, so much pains and labour, so much care and trouble, so much loss and damage, so much unrest and disquiet, so much hatred and ill-will, so much disparagement and discredit, so many anxieties and perplexities, so many weary walks, so much waiting and attendance, so many disappointments and discouragements, so many griefs and aches, so many infirmities and diseases, so many watches and broken sleeps, so many dangers and distresses, so many bitter throbs, and sharp stings, and fiery scorplings of a wounded Conscience; so much, and so much, and so much misery, all for a few minutes of pleasure, for a little white and yellow dirt, for a feather, or a fly, a buzz of honour or applause, a fanfie, or a humour, for a place of business, or vexation, sum'd up all in air, and wind, and dust, and nothing. Learn thus to make a daily reflection upon your selves and sins.

But after all these, remember lastly, 'tis Death, eternal Death, everlasting misery, Hell, and damnation without end, that is, the end of sin; that all this everlasting is for a thing that's never lasting, a thing that vanishes often in its doing; all this death for that only which is the very shame of life, and even turns it into death: and surely you will no longer yield your members, your souls and bodies to iniquity, unto iniquity, but unto righteousness, unto holiness. So shall ye happily comply with the *Apostles* argument in the *Text*, (and draw it as he would have you, to the head, do what he intends and aims at by it; and by so doing, attain that which he desires you should) make your selves the greatest gainers can be imagined; gain good out of evil, glory out of shame, life out of death, all things out of nothing, eternal life, everlasting glory. (Which, &c.

A
S E R M O N
O N T H E
Fourth Sunday in Lent.

I C O R. IX. 24.

—So run that you may obtain.



That Christianity is a Race, and Heaven the Goal, and we, all of us, they that are to run, is an ordinary *Allegory* in *Scripture* and *Sermons*, which you have none of you but heard. And that in this Race all that run do not obtain, no more than they do that run in other Races, every one sees, and every one can tell you. *Not everyone*, we told you the last day, not they that run only with their tongues, run they *Lord, Lord*, never so fast; not many others that run further than so you will hear anon, and too common experience can inform you.

But how so to run as to obtain is not a piece of so common knowledge. *Hic labor hoc opus est.* This is the Apostles business, a business ordinary Christians are not sufficiently skill'd in, 'tis to be fear'd; or if sufficiently skill'd in, not so practised in, but that they want a *voice* both *behind* and before *them* to tell them, *this is the way* they are to walk in. *This is the way, walk in it, so, and so run that you may obtain.*

Were we to run in those *Olympick Games* (which *St. Paul* here seems to allude to) they who were practised in those sports and exercises, were fittest to instruct us how so to run as to be conquerours there. But being now to run the true *Olympick*, that is, the heavenly Race, the true Race to heaven that true *Olympus*, which that *Poetical* did but shadow, this our *Apostle*, that great wrafter, *not against flesh and blood* (though in another sense against that too) *but against Principalities, and Powers, against the Rulers of darkness and spiritual wickedness*, whose whole life was nothing else but a continual exercise of all the hardships in the Christian course, who so gloriously *fought the good fight*, and *finished his course*, can best teach us how to do so too. With this *Prerogative* too above the cunningest of those *Olympick Masters*, that they cannot so instruct their Schollars that they shall be sure of the prize they run for, though they run never so accurately

accurately to their Rules, many there running, and but one obtaining; but here by St. Paul's direction we may all run, and all obtain. For to that purpose only we are invited and directed to run, that we may obtain.

Yet true it is, as we may all obtain, so we may not; and it will be but a spur to us to fear it, one spur to hasten and quicken us in our course. St. Paul had such a one now and then to make him run. He had run much; from *Hierusalem* round about unto *Illyricum*, Rom. xv. 19. yet lest he had, or *should run in vain*, he gathers up his heels and to *Hierusalem* he goes again, to see whether he had not run so, or might not at the last, Gal. ii. 2. and notwithstanding all his great pains and care in the Gospel of Christ, in preaching it freely too, ver. 18. without any charge to the *Corinthians*, applying himself to all ways and means to gain *them*, and and becoming any thing to make *them* Christs, ver. 22. he yet tells us what a doe he kept with his body, lest when he had done all he *should be a Castaway*.

But that such a one he should not be, he had some hope, that he should be a partaker rather of the Gospel in its Reward as well as in its Work, in the *verse* before the *Text*. This is the other spur to him in his course, must be to us, that *we* thus quickned to our Race, and by these two, hope to obtain, and fear to lose, as by two leaden Plummets, in each hand one, to poise us as we run, may so run as to obtain.

We *may* obtain, that's our hope; yet it is but *may*, that's our fear: Yet no fear at all, if we run but so as we should, if we observe but the *Apostles* *εως*, his way and mode. To obtain or get to heaven is a work of labour and business, not of pretence and talk. It was we lately told you, to do somewhat, now you will find it to do much, to take some pains, and run about it. 'Tis a business of order and regularity, so and so, not any how, to be performed. 'Tis a work of time and forecast, that considers seriously what it is about; that casts which way to go, and whither we are going; what it is we aim at, and how to compass it; what it is we would obtain, and how to obtain it.

Thus whilst I have given you the Sum, I have given you also the Division of the *Text*, only I shall point out the parts again in order, and tell you I shall observe,

- I. That *Christianity*, or the *Christians course to heaven is a work of labour and business*, 'tis to *run* and go.
- II. That all pains and labour, every running will not serve, it must be *εως*, so and so, after a certain way, *rightly ordered* so as to *obtain*, such as is fit and proportionable to the end we aim at.
- III. That this end we are to set before us, and so order all our course and courses towards it, to propound heaven for the end of all our actions.
- IV. And then, lastly, to stir up our souls and bodies to it with this consideration of this *may*; this Particle, which may serve both to awe, and to encourage us, that from the hope that we *may*, and the fear because it is no more than *may*, not *shall* or *must*, we may be the more diligent in our course, and the more successful in our end, that we may be sure so to run as to obtain.

I begin at the *Christians course*, to shew you what it is; then (2.) whether it tends. It tends to a Crown, it tends to a Reward, it tends to Heaven, it tends to *obtain* it, but by pains and labour it is (1.) that it attchieves it. It is a course of labour and pains that must bring us to heaven whereby only we can obtain it.

If Christianity be a course or Race, as St. Paul styles it, 2 Tim. iv. it is a course of labour. *Multa tulit fecitque puer, sudavit & alsit. Many a hot and cold sweat it has in it*; much done, and much suffered in it from our childhood. Thence they begin to inure themselves to hardships and exercise that intend to bear the Garlands at those Sports and Games. There should we begin too to minister before the Lord, with Samuel, when we are Children. If we have not, our Children may serve the Lord, as he did, girded with a *Linnen Ephod*, 1 Sam. ii. 18. their *Loyns girt* up for the course, even from their Childhood; girt with white Linnen, pure and harmless innocence; with a *Linnen Ephod*, bound to holy exercises, to assist Eli the Priest in the service of God, if it be but with short *Responsals* and *Amens*; girt and set betimes to Gods service. The word *run* is no idle word, there is pains and labour in it. They much deceive themselves that think there is a *Quis requisivit* upon all hardships in Christianity, that when men tell them of any strictness or rigours there, answer presently, *who has required it at your hands?* Who? Why, he has done it, who they say has not. Else certainly the Apostle would have spared himself as well as they; would not have been so often *beaten with rods*, and laid on with stripes, so often *shipwrackt*, in *journeyings* so often, in *perils* so often, *perils of waters*, and *perils of robbers*, in *perils by his own Country-men*, *perils by the heathen*, *perils in the wilderness*, *perils in the sea*, *perils among false brethren*; he would not have been so often in *weariness* and *painfulness*, in *watchings* so often, so much in *hunger*, and *thirst*, in *fastings* so frequent, in *cold* and *nakedness* so commonly, in *deaths* so oft as he tells us he was, 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25, 26, 27. had the way to heaven been so easie, as these men, that would not forgo a jot of ease or pleasure, of meat, or drink, or sleep for heaven, would have it. Nor would he have prov'd the course of his Ministry to be Gods, by his *patience*, *afflictions*, *necessities*, *distresses*, by *stripes*, *imprisonments*, *tossings* to and fro, by *labours*, and *watchings*, and *fastings*, as he does, 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5. could he have told how to have prov'd it better. Nor would he have taken so much pains to keep under his body, to buffet and humble it as he does, ver. 27. of this very Chapter; Were not this obtaining Heaven somewhat a hard and laboursome business. This is the course that brings thither, the course that, finished, brought him the *Crown of righteousness*, 2 Tim. iv. 8. It is violence and force that take heaven, says our only Saviour. The way to it is not strow'd with Roses and Violets, nor spread with Carpets and Cushions, *non jacet in molli*, but with Thorns, and Briers, and craggy Rocks.

There are works and duties of Christianity, that cannot be performed without much trouble. He must not fear his skin that puts himself into Christs service; he must venture far, and hazard much sometimes unless he will give out by the way, and lose his reward. There is nothing so hard in humane affairs but may fall into the spiritual and heavenly. The pursuit of worldly projects, those empty, unsatisfying, and troublesome nothings cost us many a weary step, many a broken sleep, many a tired body: and can we think to obtain the fulness of the joys above, that fill and never fail, with less? Surely, did we consider the practise of those first Christian *Saints* and *Martyrs*, those daily pains and cares their days and nights were spent in, we would think our Race to heaven another-gates business, Christianity another manner of thing than we make it now adays, or are willing to conceive it.

Were there no other word than this *τρέξτε* in the Text, this *run* to express it, we might understand it to be a work of labour, and if we take it with

with that reference it has to the *Olympick Races*, there are many things in the performance that will sufficiently shew it. What a deal of pains and care did they take first to fit and prepare themselves? And then with what might and main did they pursue their course? How often have such Racers been taken up at the Goal so tired and spent that they have had much ado to recover their life or spirits? Ah! did we but half so much for heaven there were no doubt of it.

Running, take we it how we will, is a violent exercise, that for the time employs all the parts and powers. 'Tis *that* the *Apostle* would have here, that all the faculties and powers of our souls and bodies should be taken up in the business of heaven. Our heads study it, our hearts bend wholly to it, our affections strive violently after it, our hands labour for it, our feet run the ways of Gods Commandments to come to it, our eyes run down with water for it, and our bodies with sweat about it. 'Twill cost somewhat more to come to heaven than a few good words at the last, than a *Lord forgive me and have mercy upon me*, when we are going out of the World; or than a hot fit or two of Piety when we are in it; or a cold and careless walking and stragling up and down in it throughout even all our lives. Nay, more, 'tis not running over whole *Breviaries* of Prayers. 'Tis not running over good Books only neither, reading and studying of good things, but running as we read, *that all that run may read* in our running the *Characters* of heaven. Would men but lay this to heart, that it is no such easie or perfunctory business to get thither, their courses would be better, their lives holier, themselves heavenlier than they are, nor would so many put off the work to the last cast, make a meer death-bed business of it, as if they then were fit enough to run Gods ways when they cannot stir a hand or foot; whereby 'tis more then to be fear'd they deceive themselves, and being then in no possibility to run, they go they know not whither.

II. And yet for all the pains and running we talk of, if now secondly it have not an *ἔτος* to rule and steer it, if it be not a *so* running, such a one as is right set to obtain, we had as good sit still. This *so* to run, is (1.) To run lawfully; (2.) To run carefully; (3.) To run speedily; (4.) To run willingly; (5.) To run stoutly; (6.) To run patiently; (7.) To run constantly, and to the end. To run (1.) lawfully, according to the Laws and Rules prescribed to obtain it; (2.) Carefully, the way to obtain it; (3.) Speedily, with the speed requisite to obtain it; (4.) Willingly with spirit to obtain it; (5.) Stoutly, to endure any thing to obtain it; (6.) Patiently, to expect to obtain it; (7.) Constantly, not giving out till we obtain it.

1. Lawfully, according to the Laws and Rules of the Race we are to run, we are not crowned else, says our Apostle, *2 Tim. ii. 5*. Now the Laws of the Christian Race are Gods Commandments; according to which we are diligently to direct our steps: Yet three Laws there are more particular and proper to it, the Law of Faith, the Law of Hope, and the Law of Charity. These the three more peculiar Rules of it. We must run in a full belief of Gods Promises in Christ, that in him they are yea, and in him *Amen*, that God will not let one tittle of them fall to the ground, *Looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2*. of our course too. We must, secondly, run in hope, that through his grace we also, even we though the most unworthy, shall obtain, *laying hold upon the hope so set before us, Heb. vi. 18*. And thirdly, in Charity must be our course, though we strive for the mastery, it must not

be in strife or envy, but in love and charity, in unity and peace, in *love unfeigned* our selves, 2 Cor. vi. 6. and provoking one another to it, Heb. x. 24. no other strifes or provocation, but who shall go before one another in love, so keeping the bond of peace, which once broken, our clothes and garments, which were tied up to us with it, as with a girdle, fall all down about us, and hinder us both in our Race, and of our Crown. Those who have broke this bond, and rent the Churches Robes, and their own souls by their unhappy separations, will, after all their labour with those in the *Psalm*, sleep their sleep, and find nothing; nothing but that they have hindered both others and themselves of the Crown of glory. Run we lawfully and orderly then, that first.

And (2.) run we carefully too, neither to the right hand, nor to the left; neither looking after sensual pleasures, or worldly profits, or sinful lusts, not turning aside after those golden balls, which the Devil, the Flesh, and world, are always casting in the way to hinder us, but straight on our course, carefully shunning all temptations, stumbling-blocks, and stones of offence, which are likely to trip up our heels, and throw us in our race; *what carefulness*, says St. Paul, 2 Cor. vii. 11. has your godly sorrow wrought? will earnest desire of a heavenly Crown, say I, work in you, if you would think upon it?

It would make you (3.) gather up all your strength, set to all your force, put to all your speed; you would think you could not come soon enough to so glorious a Goal. *Let us go speedily, and pray before the Lord*, say they in *Zachary* viii. 21. *Make haste and come down*, says our Saviour to *Zachary*, St. Luke xix. 6. as if he that meant to see Christ here at his own house, or hereafter in his, must make what haste he can. Running is our speediest motion, and the more haste to Heaven, the better speed; though to earthly things the proverb says it is not; and the reason may be indeed, because our swiftest motion is to be towards Heaven, to be reserv'd for that.

Yet willingly (4.) must it be, we must do it without Whip, or Spur, they are for unreasonable Beasts, and not for men in running. We are not to look that God should force and drive us to his work, he loves no such workmen: A ready mind is Gods Sacrifice, he accepts no other. *If I do it willingly*, says our Apostle, ver. 17. *I have a reward*, no reward else to be expected.

But (5.) we must run stoutly too, bear any thing, do any thing, endure any thing for the Crown of Heaven; afflictions, persecutions, reproaches, any losses, any hardships, for the name of Christ. We must not be frightened out of our course of Piety, and Religion, by the threats of men, nor put out of it by the scoffs and flouts of standers by, nor driven from it by the fear of danger, and loss; nor diverted by the hope of earthly honour and preferment, nor flatter'd out of it by ease and pleasure, nor fool'd out of it by seducers and false guides; but bear up stoutly in our course, against wind, and weather, storm and tempest, men and devils.

And though some of these perhaps may somewhat hinder us in our course, and make it the more difficult, and the way seem longer, yet (6.) if we *run with patience*, as our Apostle again would have us, Heb. xii. 1. *the race which is set before us*; if we give not over yet, but go on expecting, content however though it be long, that we shall come at last, willing to suffer any thing, and stay any time that God would have us, we shall obtain at last; but if we give out, we are lost for ever.

For

For (7.) constantly also we are to run, not to run a while, and then make a stand; now a spurt, and then a spurt, *Ubi non currere ibi deficere incipis*, says devout St. Bernard, *When we begin to slack our running, we begin to fail of our reward.* If we give over here, if we did run well, and do not, St. Paul says we are bewitched, Gal. v. 7. and will ask us too, as he did them, who has bewitched us, that we should no longer obey the truth, that we run no more? we must run constantly and not give over, nay, and constantly also and not give out. *He that continues to the end, is he only that shall be saved*, that shall obtain the crown of life. Christ himself, who is our Crown, and our Joy, he was obedient unto the death; and unless we be so too, unless we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end, we shall not be partakers of him; for they only are, that do so, Heb. iii. 14. So now you have this *ἔτος*, the manner of your running, how it must be, lawfully, according to the rule that God has given, that we swerve not from it; carefully in the way that God has set us, that we erre not from it; speedily, that we come not when the doors are shut; chearfully, that we may have a reward; stoutly, that we be not baffled in our course; patiently, that we faint not by the way; and constantly, that we fail not of our end, the salvation of our souls. *So run that ye may obtain.*

Ay, but how may we obtain to run so? why, do as the runners in Races do (1.) Diet our bodies, (2.) Exercise our selves before, (3.) Consider, and contrive how we had best to run: And (4.) strip our selves of all incumbrances that may hinder us in our speed, And indeed, these may well go into the *ἔτος*, belong at least to the so running as has annexed to it the obtaining.

1. Diet we our bodies by temperance and abstinence. 'Tis in the *next verse*, that every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things. *Abstinuit vino & Venere*, says the Poet, he abstains from riot and drunkenness, runs not with the world into the same excess of riot, 1 Pet. iv. 4. from chambering and wantonness, runs not to his neighbours bed; a head full of drink, a belly full of meat, and a body weakened with lust, are fitter to lie down than to run. He that intends himself for a Race, for this especially, must keep under his body, and bring it into subjection, with St. Paul, ver. 27. keep it empty, and agile, and firm, and sound.

And (2.) he must exercise himself for the Race, that intends so to run as to obtain; they do so that run Races, try and exercise before, keep themselves continually doing: and they that are skilful in the word of righteousness, and successful in the work, have *their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*, Heb. vi. 14. must exercise themselves unto godliness, 1 Tim. iv. 7. exercise themselves day and night, in the law of God, Psal. i. 2. and with St. Paul, again, exercise themselves to have always a Conscience void of offence, toward God, and toward men, Acts xxiv. 16.

3. Consider also and contrive we must, what way we had best to take, how we shall avoid this rock of offence, that stone of stumbling, that hill of pride, that ditch of lust, those thorns in the flesh, those dangers by the way, those impediments and hinderances which are likest to interrupt or slacken us in our course, so to take all advantages, lay hold of all opportunities, catch all occasions of our advance in goodness, know where to haste, and where to slack, when to bear up, and when to put forward, when to spare, and when to put to all our strength. If we can but hit this *ἔτος*, this *sic*, this *so*, this way, this order; no doubt either

of our well running, or our sure obtaining; either so to run, or so obtain as the *Text* would have us.

And (4.) after all this dieting, all this exercising of our selves, and all this contrivance with our selves, as the last preparation, or rather setting out to our course, we must deuest and strip our selves of all our cumberfom garments, lay aside every weight and the sin that does so easily beset us, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Heb. xii. 1.* lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, as *St. James i. 21.* put off all the works of darkness, *put off the old man, and put on the new*, the new white robe of righteousness and holiness (for in thin white vestments only did they use to run races) having our joynts suppld, and our bodies anointed with the sweet oil of holy resolutions, being first washed with the pure waters of repentance. It was an old Ceremony, in some Churches yet observ'd, in Baptism, to anoint the baptized person in the name of the Lord, in token that he was now to address himself to the course, to run the race of Christianity, that was then set before him. You have now this *εως τειχους* complete, what it is so to run both in its setting out, and in its moving on, we will now see what it will come to in the end, to obtain.

Yet before I come to that, give me leave a little to sum up the whole manner of our running, by a kind of *allegorizing*, some several runnings in Scripture we may read of.

Leave we then first the oxen and run we with *Elisba* after *Elijah*, *2 Kings xix. 20.* Leave we all secular and worldly business to tend upon the word of the Lord in the mouths of his Prophets. Run we next with *Laban* to the well, *Gen. xxiv. 29.* to the well-springs of salvation. Rouse we up our selves then out of our beds, out of our drowsie dulness and earthiness, with young *Samuel*, *1 Sam. iii. 5.* and run to *Eli*, the Priest, to ask counsel of him, when God begins first to appear to us, that we may be instructed what to do. Run we then with little *Zacheus*, *S. Luke xix. 4.* and climb up into the tree, make our thoughts ascend, that we may see Christ. Run we then after him, with the people on foot, *S. Mark vi. 35.* out of our Cities, refuse no pains, nor think much to leave our houses a while to overtake him. When we see goods thoughts coming to us, run we as *Abraham* did, to meet the Angels, *Gen. xx. 5.* make haste to entertain them, and bow down our selves before them, and entreat them to stay, and tarry with us; run then presently to the herd and fetch a calf and haste to slay and dress it for them, *ver. 7.* to the unruly herd of our sensual passions, and affections, and mortifie them and dress them better than heretofore. When any evil motions at any time arise, run we with *David*, *1 Sam. xvii. 51.* and stand upon that *Philistin*, and cut off his head, kill it in the cradle, nip it in the bud. When we fall into sin, run with *Rebecca*, *Gen. xxiv. 20.* unto the well again, and draw thence the waters of Repentance. If any temptation yet pursue us, that we cannot resist, run we away with *Fotham*, *Judges ix. 21.* and flee from it. When troubles come upon us, run we to the hills, from whence cometh our help, to the name of the Lord, as a strong tower, *Prov. xviii. 10.* to our prayers. When we are in any good way of devotion and piety, run we like the Sun out of his Chamber, and rejoyce we like a Giant to run our course, *Psal. xix. 5.* Run we like *Joels* horsemen, *Joel ii. 4.* like *Nahums* lightning, *Nahum ii. 4.* in all good ways. If adversity betide us, run we like the Rivers that the Prophet *David* speaks of among the hills, *Psal. civ. 10.* hold up our heads still for all the sorrow. If prosperity engirt

girt us, run we with *Abimaaz*, by the way of the plain, be lowly and humble in it; and when any good befalls us, run we with *St. Peter* and *John* unto the Sepulchre, *St. John* xx. 4. think we of our lives end, how little a while we may enjoy it: run we to our friends with *Rebecca*, and tell them of it, make them partakers of Gods goodness too, that they may rejoyce and praise God with us. In a word, in all distresses, in all necessities, run we with those *Benjamites*, *Judges* xx. 41. to the *Rock Rimmon*, the *Rock Christ Jesus*, and abide there not for some months or years, but for ever, so run and so obtain. There will all our running be at an end, and he and his salvation, he in his Fathers house is the end of all our running, that which we are to aim at, that which we are to run for.

III. For run for something we must, and we can run for nothing better. All men and creatures stir not from their place, but for some end, to obtain somewhat. But men and reasonable creatures propound it to themselves. I cannot tell you the several ends they do propound; but I can tell you the end they should propound. Or rather let *St. Paul* tell you, and you shall go no further for it then the very next verse, a *Crown incorruptible*, if you would yet know plainer what that is, look but to the 2 of *Tim.* ii. 10. and thus you find it, that ye may obtain the salvation which is in *Christ Jesus*, with eternal glory.

Indeed methinks the one only word of the *Text*, this *καταλάβετε*, this obtain single without any super-addition, is sufficient to express it all: for we obtain nothing till we obtain that, all that we get, or gain, or purchase till we come to that, to the salvation in *Christ*, with eternal glory, is not worth the name of obtaining, of *καταλάβετε*, all Crowns, and glories of the world but dross and dung, not worth the taking up, not any thing worth obtaining in comparison of this Crown of Glory.

Ut Comprehendatis it is in Latin; and it is a word that the Schoolmen, whose business is to speak most accurately and distinctly, have always appropriated to the other life. There we are first only *comprehensores*, comprehensours, that is, obtainers. Nay, *St. Paul* himself is so punctual too, that after all his pains in the Gospel of *Christ*, all his conformity to *Christ*, and the greatest height of perfection in *Christ*, that he was arrived at, (which is a business and glory worth all the earth besides) says yet *ἡ λογίζομαι κατεργασμένην*, I count not my self to have comprehended, or obtained, so it should be rendred, *Phil.* iii. 13. professes himself not to have obtained. Attained perhaps he will grant you, or apprehended, somewhat towards it; apprehended peradventure, but not comprehended, *ἔλαβον*, but not *κατέλαβον*, made way to his Crown, but not come to it, not obtained it.

So you see what it is you are to run for. Not a Crown of Bays or Laurel, not the praise and commendations of men, not any earthly honour, interest, or profit; but the honour of Heaven, the praise of God, the Crown of Glory.

Not fading and decaying pleasures, such as the leaves of the trees, or the flower of the field, that give a verdant beauty and fragrant smell for a while and vanish, are we to set before us. Not the praise of men are we to run our race, or do our works for; to be seen of men, and commended by them. They indeed that do so, says *Christ*, have their reward, but they had better be without it; for 'tis but *ἀπὸ χειρὸς*, not *καταλάβετε*; they have it away with them, and must look for no more, that's all they are like to have; they have beaten the air, contrary to the *Apostle*, ver. 26. and with the air they are past away: Air they sought for, and air they

they only have, a little foolish and vain breath, for all their pains; they can shew nothing that they have obtained; and the very praise they sought proves nothing too; for not he that man commends, but whom the Lord commends, is only truly praised and commended, 2 Cor. x. 18. Not any earthly ends (3.) are we to run for; that is, but *curre in incertum*, at the best, to run as uncertainly, to run for uncertainties, things that it is a doubt whether we shall get in in Gods Service, (who rewards us better than with temporal rewards) and it is no doubt but they are most uncertain, and cannot, *comprehendi*, be so laid hold on that they will not flee away; things that we our selves are to deny our selves in Gods Service sometimes, such as it is a point of our running, to run from, when they will hinder our course; and such as in such times as these are not to be expected by them that faithfully and stoutly run the Christian race, that hold out their course in true Religion, and the obedience of Christ, and the Communion of his Church. Heaven only it is we are to run to, and *Jesus the author and finisher of our Faith*, our infinite and exceeding great reward, and the joy which was set before him it is we are to look to, to no other recompence of reward, no other recompencer and rewarder.

But to him and to that lastly now we are to look: if he himself set the joy of the right hand of the Throne of God before his eyes, that he might the better endure the cross, and despise the shame, and so run the race that his Father set him, as it is, *Heb. xii. 2.* if he had an eye to the recompence of reward, well certainly may we set such a consideration before us, and they talk they know not what, that deny it. God allures us by rewards, and Christ himself preaching the Gospel began it, with this encouragement to incite us to listen to it, because the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, *St. Matth. iv. 17.* Set we then those joys before us, and fear not: look we in all our tribulations and sufferings, upon them, to comfort and uphold us, in all our difficulties to encourage us, in all our devotions to enflame us. Consider we, that all we do, that all we suffer, is nothing to be compared to the Crown of Glory, that is laid up for us, that all our pains and labour, going, and running, and sweating, and blowing for Christ, is not to be mentioned or thought upon; so that at last we may obtain.

IV. Yet to keep our spirits in awe, and keep down our pride, that is likely to arise sometimes upon our well running, and to make us diligent and constant in our course, let us remember, it is but a *may obtain* the while; we may miss as well, shall too, if we run not orderly, or give out. 'Tis no more than we shall reap if we faint not, *Gal. vi. 9.* If we fail or faint we shall not; our Kingdom is removed, our Crown is gone. Work we then our salvation out with fear and trembling, as the *Apostle* advises us, *Phil. ii. 12.* that's the way to make us so to run as to obtain. There's no such certainty to obtain, as some imagine, and delude themselves with; no peremptory decree for their obtaining, though they run how they will, nor any peremptory order neither that they shall run in their due time whether they will or no: that God will force them either to the Race, or to the Crown; either to run, or to obtain. 'Tis a common, but the greatest vanity and fallacy in the world to think to get to Heaven without pains, to go thither with all kind of pomp, and ease, and pleasures to have our portion here, and hereafter too. 'Tis no such matter, the way is strait, and narrow, that leads thither, says he that came to shew it, *St. Mat. vii. 14.* and a race here we have to run for it,
and

and all the way but a *may*, a possibility, or a probability, not a necessity to obtain it. Look we carefully to our feet, apply we our selves diligently to our course, to run the ways of righteousness, and peace; of holiness, and salvation. Let us often look up to Heaven, and the Crown of Glory laid up there, to add wings and spirit to us; and look we also down sometimes to the dangers by the way, and fear our selves, and mark our steps, lest we chance to stumble, and fall, to grow faint, or weary; but that we may run lawfully, carefully, speedily, chearfully, stoutly, patiently, and constantly to the end; that so running, we may obtain the end of our hopes, the crown of of our joy, the salvation of our souls, and the redemption of our bodies, everlasting life, and eternal glory. Which, &c.

A Ser.

A
S E R M O N
O N T H E
Fifth Sunday in Lent.

1 C O R. ix. 25.

*And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.
Now they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an incorruptible.*



The *Text* is a comparison between the worldly Combatant and the spiritual, between the wrafter of this World, and the wrafter with it, between him that strives for the mastery over others, and him that strives for the mastery over himself; between the contenders in the *Olympick Games*, and the contender in the *Christian Race*.

And 'tis an apt and fit comparison. *Olympus* in the *Heathen Poets* is commonly used for heaven, so the *Olympick* exercises may well be used to resemble those for heaven, and the heavenly Crown likened to the *Olympick* Garland, without any offence, though with all advantage.

And 'tis as seasonable as fit. This holy time of *Lent* is a time of striving for the mastery with our corruptions, with our corruptible for Gods incorruptible, a time of holy exercises upon the corruptible earth to obtain a Crown incorruptible in the heavens.

And 'tis somewhat more accommodate and easie to our natures, as much as temperance is than fasting, as partial abstinence from inordinacy and excess, than abstaining altogether.

Which makes me hope it will be as profitable as either fit, or seasonable, or accommodate; to teach us by comparing our selves with the Wrasters of the World; our work with theirs, our reward with theirs, to do as much as they. Indeed, it should be more, as our work is more honourable than theirs, more honourable to master our selves than others, our own unruly beastly passions than any man or beast whatever; and our Crown more worth than theirs, incorruptible than corruptible, and the obtaining it every way as easie, if we would but think it so, or set seriously to think of it: what they do, and what they do it for, how much they do, and how little they do it for; what we do, and for what

we

we do it ; how little we do, and for how much we do it ; how little they get for so much, how much we may get for so little.

This is the Sum of the *Text* ; and the intent is to perswade us to be as industrious and careful for a Crown of glory as they are for a Crown of grass, to take as much pains for the praise of God as they did for the applause of men, to do and suffer as much for heaven as they for less than earth, for a few leaves that grow out of it. And both the one is the better to be understood, the other the more likely to be perswaded if I keep the parts of the Comparison together, and do not sunder them, but compare them as we go.

The *two Combatants*. The *two strivings*. The *two Dietings or Preparations*. The *two Crowns*.

The *two Combatants*, the *Temporal and Spiritual*.

The *Temporal*, he that striveth for the *Mastery*, *Qui in agone contendit*,

The *Spiritual*, we, St. Paul and we Christians.

The *two strivings* : *Theirs* express, *ours* understood ; they strive for masteries, yet not they only, but we also.

The *diet or preparing* for it much alike, *they are temperate in all things* ; yet not *they* alone, but we must too ; they do it, but we do it too, or should so, by the *Apostles* similitude.

The *two Crowns*, the one *corruptible*, that's *theirs* ; the other *incorruptible*, that's *ours* ; both expressly mentioned and compar'd.

And by comparing them together we shall see the great obligation that lies upon us to be temperate in all things, that is, as you shall see anon, to do all things whereby we may come at last to obtain this incorruptible Crown of glory.

I begin with the two *Combatants* : the one, is *any man* ; the other, *any Christian* ; the first is a man and no more, the other has a relation to Christ added to him.

That man, that every man striveth for the mastery, to outgo his fellow some way or other is from his very nature ; there is a kind of natural contention thence in every body to be some body more than ordinary. If this contention were placed upon good things, or things worth the striving for, it were happy for us. But if we have no better assistance than from nature, we fix it upon Games and Sports, Vanities and Trifles 'tis them we only strive about, there lies our business and our study. *Πᾶς ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος*, every one of us is no better, strive and study for nothing else ; and yet vain men that we are, we trouble and toil our selves as much about such nothings, as if they were all we could desire, all we could do.

It being then so natural and necessary a condition to every one of us to be striving for somewhat or other, to aim at some excellence or other, to be better than our neighbours in some way or other. It were to be desired that this desire, and earnest pursuit were pitched right. 'Tis so in the other of the two *Combatants*, the *Christian*.

He indeed is the only *man that strives for the mastery*. All others strive for that only which is but slavery when all is done ; We, We Christians alone strive for that which is mastery and excellence. The more men strive for earthly things, the more are they brought under the dominion of them, the greater is their vassalage, and brings them no better, but to cry out with Paul, in the person of the unregenerate man, *Rom. vii. who shall deliver me from this body of death?* 'Tis Gods service only that is perfect freedom ; we are then only free when we are free to righteousness,

then only masters when we can command our selves. For *an ille mihi liber videatur cui mulier imperat?* &c. says the *Heathen Orator*. Can you think him to have got the mastery whom vanity commands, whom his Lusts give Law to, who can neither go nor come, eat nor drink, wake nor sleep, work nor play, speak nor do, desire nor think, but what they would have him. *Ego vero istum non modo servum sed nequissimum servum, etiamsi in amplissima familiâ natus sit, appellandum puto.* I truly. says he again, think he is not only a servant, but a drudge, be he who he will, of never so honourable a Family. I add, be his victory never so great and notable in meer vain and corruptible things. They do but press him down the more, and subject him to vanity, and leave him groaning under the bondage of corruption. The master over these is the true Christian only, who by his faith and resignation conquers all his conquests, gets the better both when he overcomes, and is overcome; both when his enemy oppresses him, as well as when himself subdues him, who makes all things serve his triumph, every thing enhance his glory, also things work unto his good, advance his Crown. All else are but the slaves of their conquests, meer drudges to an empty name, an airy title.

And (2.) if we take ἀγωνιστής for one that strives or fights, none so truly does it as the Christian. All else do but beat the air, fight with nothing in comparison; their combates are not only meerly vain, vain scufflings with air and wind, to no purpose in the world, but the very things and enemies they encounter are, at the best, but men whose breath is in their nostrils, lighter than the very air, and vanity it self, if we believe the *Psalmist*, *Psal. lxii. 9.* and what great conquest over such? 'Tis the Christian that fights indeed, that combates enemies indeed; *Principalities, and Powers, and spiritual wickednesses in high places*, enemies strong and mighty, that go invisible, and strike and wound us when we see them not, that fight with us out of high and almost inaccessible places of defence, that have all possible advantage over us. These are enemies, if we talk of enemies, to fight with indeed. The enemies worldly men so tremble at are but *bragadochios* to these, all their force and power but weakness if compared with the powers of hell and darkness. This is fighting, to fight with these, to fight with devils, and sins, and lusts; and thus the Christian is the only fighter, the πᾶς ἀγωνιστής, none but he.

And if I may have leave to expound ἀγωνιστής, one in an agony, as sometimet it is, none fight to agonies like Christians; they come even to the fiery trial, even unto blood, even unto death. They did not so in the *Olympick, Pythian, Nemean, or Isthmian Games*, they were but Games and Sports to the Christian Combate, that fights often to the death, must have always that intention not to give over for death it self, but continue constant to the end. So here we have in this first point even the mastery amongst them that strive for mastery, that they strive for things not worth the striving for; that they strive indeed for slavery, not Mastery; that they scarce do any thing worth the name of striving or fighting; that theirs is but play and sport in comparison of the Christian Combatant; and yet for all that a great deal they do for the victory in these petty trifles; they wrastle, and cuff, and leap, and throw, and run, and try all their strength and powers. And 'tis worth the while to see whether we strive and contend as much in our real Christian combate, in a case vvorthy of the vvhile and labour. That vve are novv to do, secondly, to compare our strivings, theirs and ours, the Grecian and the Christian exercises.

Five several exercises, or kinds of striving for the mastery, there was in those *Corinthian-games*, *wrestling*, *Cuffing*, *Quoiting*, *Leaping*, *Running*. All these answered in our Christian course and exercise.

1. *Wrestling*. *wrestling against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*, says St. Paul, Eph. vi. 12. *wrestling* secondly with God in prayer, as Jacob did, Gen. xxxii. 24.

2. *Cuffing* and buffeting there is to; buffeting our selves, keeping under our bodies, and bringing them into subjection, St. Pauls ὑποτάζειν, ver. 27. making our eyes and bodies, as it were, black and blew by watchings and fastings; cuffing or buffeting our eyes for looking after, our ears for listning to, our bodies for doing, punishing all our powers and senses for acting any thing that is evil; a being buffeted too (2.) by Satan when we forget to buffet our selves, 2 Cor. xii. 7. Cuffing and buffeting sufficient to be found in the Christians exercise.

3. *Quoiting* or casting; casting away any weight that hinders us, any sin that does beset us, Heb. xii. 1. removing every stone of offence, giving no offence to any in any thing, that our Ministry be not blamed, 2 Cor. vi. 3. that nothing we do, nothing we omit, neither our doing or our not doing, be a stone of stumbling, whereby our brother may justly stumble, or is offended, or is made weak, Rom. xiv. 21. Throw all such stones out of the way, and strive who shall so come nearest that great corner stone Christ Jesus, or the mark of your high calling of God in Christ Jesus, Phil. iii. 14.

4. *Leaping* also is to be found among the Christians exercises, skipping and leaping for joy at the glad tidings of the Gospel, leaping and praising God with the lame man that was healed, Acts iii. 8. striving who shall leap farthest in it, leaping, with Abraham, St. Joh. viii. (for so the word signifies) to see the day of Christ; Leaping, with holy David, before the Ark, 2 Sam. vi. 16. rejoycing, and leaping for joy in the day of our sufferings for Christ, St. Luke vi. 23. making it one of our daily exercises and businesses to praise and magnifie God, and rejoyce in him, in all his days, and ways, and dispensations, strive with one another who shall do it most, who shall go farthest in it.

5. *Running* we every where meet in the Christians course, running the race which is set before us, Heb. xii. 1. so running as we may obtain, in the verse before the Text. Christianity it self is stiled a race, the Christian Law the Law of it, the Christian the runner, his life the course, heaven the goal; nothing more ordinary.

Besides these five single exercises in the *Grecian Games*, there was a sixth mixt or compounded of wrestling and cuffing both, πικρὸν they called it. But in Christianity all are joyned, all are sometimes exercised together; the Christian must be skilled and well exercised in all; wrestle against the World, the Flesh, and Devil; wrestle with God, cuff and buffet himself, suffer the buffettings of Satan too sometimes, cast away all weights and stones of hinderance and offence, leap and run with joy and eagerness the race which is set before us, looking unto Jesus, always, in all these, looking unto him that is both the author and finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2.

And being thus wholly to be kept in exercise, it will be convenient, nay, necessary now to fit and prepare our selves, so to diet and order our selves that we may so perform them as to obtain the day, to get the victory, to be temperate in all things as well as any wrestler or runner of them all.

There are four several interpretations of the word *ἐνμετριος*, which we here render temperate.

The first is what here we find it. to be temperate: to keep a certain set diet, whereby their bodies might be best strengthened and enabled, made nimble and active: so it signifieth to the Wrestlers. To observe a spare and moderate diet, such as may most advantage the souls business, best subdue the body and quicken the spirit, be it abstinence from some or sometimes from all kinds of meat and drink: so it signifies to the Christian. This the Christians, as the other the Wrestlers diet.

Very exact and punctual were they that strove for the masteries in their observances, kept their rules, and times, and kind of diet. I would the Christian now were but half so much to his rule and order. Indeed I must confess theirs was not sometimes a moral temperance, it was sometimes to fulness; yet still such as was prescribed and most conducive to their end. If we would observe as much those abstinences which most make to the enabling us in our spiritual race or combat, I shall desire no more: there indeed fasting and all temperance will come in, will be the Christians *ἐνμετριος*, the Christians being temperate in all things. A thing so necessary, that St. Jerome says no less, than, *Difficile imo impossibile est, ut presentibus quis & futuris fruatur bonis, ut hic ventrem & ibi mentem expleat, ut de deliciis transeat ad delicias, ut in utroque seculo primus sit, ut in cælo & in terrâ appareat gloriosus.* It is hard, nay impossible, no less says he, to enjoy both present and future goods, our good things here and hereafter too, to fill the belly here, and the soul hereafter, to pass from pleasure into pleasure, from fulness into fulness, to be first in earth and heaven too, glorious in both. He must feed spare here that looks to be fed full there, be temperate in all earthly delights and satisfactions, that looks for heavenly either in the other world or in this either: for the full body stifles the soul, and we are not more unwieldy in body when the belly is over full, then the soul is then. Fulness oppresses even the natural spirits, makes us we cannot even breath freely for the while, enough to shew us our rational spirits are not likely to be freer to breath, or evaporate themselves to Heaven or Heavenwards, whilst the very natural ones themselves are so oppressed. From temperance and moderation we cannot be excused, neither in meat, nor drink, nor any thing, whatever weakness may excuse from fasting: so necessary a disposing of us it is to all Christian piety and goodness, yea, and a Christian virtue too it self, *Gal. v. 23.*

The word may yet (2.) be rendred continence; so it seems to be taken, *Tit. i. 8.* where 'tis distinguished from *σωφρων*, sober, or temperate, and joyn'd next to *ἁγιος*, holy, clean, or pure. A point observed by those *agonothletæ* to abstain from Wine and Women for the time of their providing themselves against those games: So the Poet. *Qui cupit optatam cursu contingere metam abstinuit vino & Venere.* And our Apostle tells us of such a kind of temporary continence, very convenient for those Christians that more especially addict themselves to the Christian exercises, particularly of Prayer and Fasting, *chap. 7. of this Epistle, ver. 5.* But no time but commands Continence and Chastity to all Christians whosoever, that no uncleanness be so much as named among them; for it becomes not Saints, *Ephes. v. 3.* it becometh not the Gospel of Christ, which is a doctrine of all holiness and purity. Nothing more weakens and indisposes the body for vigorous and noble actions, nothing more unfits the soul for the race of Christian piety, nothing more blinds it from understanding, nothing more keeps it from desiring, nothing more dis-

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ables it from performing it then inordinate and sensual lusts, and indulging to them. To run, or wrestle, or combate well we have as much need of continence as any that ever strove for secular mastery.

A third notion of ἐγκράτεια there is to signifie a constancy of mind to abstain from all things that are hurtful. *Suidas* and *Hesychius* render it to abstain from evil. And that not only things that are truly such, but those things also sometimes that may hinder the greater good. Thus *St. Paul* in this *Chapter* a little before the *Text* abstains from using his Christian liberty, that he may so with the greater profit and success fulfil the course of his Ministry: will not use the power he had to live upon preaching of the Gospel, but voluntarily preaches to the *Corinthians* upon free cost, that he might gain the more, *ver. 19.* becomes again all things to all men, that by all means he might gain some, *ver. 22.* He saw the *Corinthians* were close, and covetous, foresaw it was like to hinder his preaching much if he put them to much charge; he therefore supercedes his power and liberty (though he convinces them from the beginning of the *Chapter*, that such he had, and just, and natural, and reasonable, and ordinary it was) lest he should not do so much good upon them as he desired. But though we must not expect that all men should advance to this height, they must yet resolve to remove all real and faulty hindrances out of the way, abstain from all occasions and appearances of evil, which may at any time hinder or rob us of our Crown, make us fall short of the Goal of Heaven and Glory.

Lastly, It may signifie his having all things in his power, πάντα ἐν κρατίῃ, the getting the mastery over himself, getting the victory over one desire after another, denying himself first one liberty, then another, till at last he has mastered all, πάντα ἐν κρατίῃ, got all into his power. Thus strove those *Grecian* Wrestlers, and Racers, ordered and tempered their bodies by degrees, first to this exercise, then another; first to this height, then a higher; first to this, then to a further, till they had gotten a perfect mastery and command over all their powers, and members, to use them to the greatest advantage and agility. This is the Christians business too, to keep our soul and body in continual exercise, always doing, ever suffering somewhat, now striving against that sin, then a second; now mortifying that lust, then another; now moderating this passion, then sweetning that; one while denying himself this liberty, then another; sometimes attempting this difficulty, then some other; sometimes running after good, sometimes wrestling with evil, sometimes cuffing and crucifying an inordinate desire, sometimes throwing off such and such a habit, sometimes leaping away in fear from an occasion or opportunity of doing ill, sometimes leaping into a way or occasion of doing good, sometimes leaping for joy when it is done: whereby at length by continual exercise and custom, we may happily come to a perfect temper in all our powers and faculties of soul and body, bring them all to an exact obedience, to the obedience of Christ, to run the race, to fight the fight that he has set before us.

Delicatus es miles, si putes te posse sine pugna vincere, sine certamine triumphare, &c. says *St. Chrysost.* Thou art too delicate a Souldier for Christ, if thou thinkest thou canst overcome without striving, triumph without fighting. *Exsere vires, &c.* put out thy strength, fight valiantly, contend fiercely in the Christian warfare: Remember thy covenant, think upon thy condition, consider thy warfare, the covenant that thou madest, the condition thou undertookst, the warfare thou gavest thy name too at thy Baptism. The
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Christians life is but a continual warfaring against the world, the flesh, and the Devil; thy Captain calls, and leads thee to it, and thy crown expects thee, not a Crown of corruptible leaves, or flowers, but an incorruptible Crown of Glory. Be temperate and sober, be chaste and continent, be vigilant and constant, be diligent and active in Christs holy work and business, that thou mayest run without falling, wrestle without being thrown, cuff without being beaten, quoit all thy labours near the mark, out-leap all evil ways, perform all thy exercises, get happily at last to the end of thy way and labour, snatch and carry away the Crown prepared for thee. That's the fourth and last point of the comparison between Crown and Crown, the one *corruptible*, the other *incorruptible*.

Here indeed first properly comes in the *But*, the comparisons before have run somewhat even; combatants, and exercises, and preparations much alike; but here nothing but the name, no comparison between mortal and immortal, vanity and reality, finite and infinite: Yet let us a little compare them as we can.

The *Crown* these Gamesters strove for was but of leaves of Pine, or Apple; of Oak, or Olive; of Laurel, nay, or even Grass sometimes: Corruptible these indeed, nay, and vain too, to do so much, *Multa tulit fecitque puer sudavit & alfit*, to run, and sweat, and toil, and keep ado for such a toy as the best of these, how vain and foolish. The very Heathen themselves *Anacharsis* in *Lucian* sufficiently deride it.

Yet as ridiculous as it seems the greatest part even of the Christian world strive and labour for as little. What is the aim of all the great ones of the world but leaves and grass? What get they by all their labours and pursuits, but some such business: Let them all have their desires, and it comes to no more. Let the one obtain his so much desired honour, another his beloved Mistress pleasure, a third his darling wealth: (of one of which three kinds of leaves all their Crowns are made) and what get they but meer fading leaves, neither fruit nor flower.

The Crown of honour, what is it, but a very leaf that withers presently? the worm of envy consumes it presently, the blast of jealousy nips it in its glory, the breath of malice deads it in a trice. The Crown of pleasure has a woe upon it, *Isa. xxviii. 1, 3.* a woe that will consume them, *Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower*: all that are drunk with any pleasure, their very Crowns wither upon their heads, the intemperate heat that both produces and rises from their sensual pleasures, turns the colour of their beauty, and will make their garlands ere long smell rank and stink with their own corruption. The Crown of Riches has a worm commonly that breeds in the leaf, this Oaken Garland in which we place so much strength, and steadfastness, has an oaken Apple among the leaves that nurses a worm to consume it when we least think of it. Nay, though we had *coronam militum*, a Crown, an Army of men as thick as the spires of Grass, to encompass and guard either our honours wealth or pleasures; yet they would all prove in a little time but as the Grass; all men are nothing else, *Sr. James i. 11.* but particularly the rich man, so says that *Apostle, ver. 10.* the rich man as the flower of the grass, he shall pass away. He shall not stay for a storm to blast or blow him away, even the Sun of prosperity shall do it, *Mole ruit sua*, his own weight and greatness shall throw him down. For the Sun is no sooner (mark but that, no sooner) risen with a burning heat,

heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower of it falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisbeth; so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. Mark that too in his very ways, his own very ways shall bring him to ruine and destruction. 'Tis so with the leaves of honour, 'tis so with the leaves of pleasure, the very Sun no sooner rises upon them, but it withers them; the very Sun-shine and favour of the Prince ruins them, the burning heat of their pleasures waste them away, make their pleasures troublesome and burthensome in a little while, and a while after vanish and confound them with shame and reproach, leave them nothing upon their heads, but ill coloured and ill seated leaves, ignominy and dishonour, nothing in their souls but driness and discomfort; their estates too oftentimes drained dry, scarce any thing but the Prodigals Husks to refresh them, or dry leaves to cover them.

But the Christians Crown is nothing such, 'tis a flourishing Crown, *Psal. cxxxii. 18.* a Crown of pure Gold, *Psal. xxi. 3.* a Crown of precious Stones, *Zech. ix. 16.* a Crown of Righteousness, *2 Tim. iv. 8.* a Crown of Life, *St. James i. 12.* a Crown of Honour, *Psal. viii. 5.* a Crown of Stars, *Rev. xii. 1.* a Crown of Glory, *1 Pet. v. 4.* a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away, in the same *verse*, eternal, everlasting. A flourishing, not a withering Crown, a Crown of Gold, not of Grass; of precious Stones, not of Leaves, of Righteousness not unjustly gotten, of Life not unto Death, of Honour not to be ashamed of, of Stars, not Stubble, of Glory, not vanity, that never so much as alters colour, but continues fresh and flourishing, and splendid to all eternity. *An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us,* says *St. Peter, 1 Pet. i. 4.*

And having now compared our Crowns, and finding so vast, so infinite a difference between them. Can we think much to do as much for this incorruptible Crown of Glory, as the other do for their vain and corruptible one? Shall they that strive for petty masteries, for toys and trifles, for ribbands and garlands, be so exact in their observances, so strict in their diet, so painful in their exercises, so vigilant in their advantages, so diligent in providing, strengthening, and enabling themselves for their several sports and undertakings, and shall we that are to strive for no less than Heaven it self, be so loose in our performances, so intemperate in meat and drink, so sluggish in our business, so careless of advantages, so negligent in all things that make towards it. Are leaves worth so much, and the fruit of eternal peace so little? Is a little air, the vain breath of a mortal man to be so sought for, and is the whole Heaven it self, and the whole Host and God of it, the praise of God and Saints, and Angels, that stand looking on us, to be so slighted, as not worth so doing, doing no more than they? Where is that man, *Dic mihi musâ virum*, shew me the man that can, that takes the pains for eternal glory, that these vain souls do for I know not how little enough to stile it.

But if we compare the pains the ambitious man takes for honour, the voluptuous for his pleasure, the covetous man for wealth; meer leaves of *Tantalus* his Tree, that do but gull, not satisfy them, the late nights, the early mornings, the broken sleeps, the unquiet slumbers, the many watches, the innumerable steps, the troublesom journeys, the short meals, the strange restraints, the often checks, the common counterbuffs, the vexatious troubles, the multitude of affronts, neglects, refusals, denials, the eager pursuits, the dangerous ways, the costly expences, the fruitless travels,

travels, the tortured minds, the wearied bodies, the unsatisfied desires when all is done, that these men suffer, and run through, the one for an honour that sometimes no body thinks so but he that pursues it; the other for a pleasure base oftentimes and villanous: the third for an estate not far from ruine, nay, oftentimes to ruine his house and posterity. If I say, we compare these mens pains and sufferings, with what we do for Christ, and God, and Heaven, and happiness, true, real, immoveable happiness and glory, Good Lord! how infinitely short do we come of them? shall not they rise up against us in judgment and condemn us; nay, shall not we our selves rise up against our selves in judgment, who have done many of these things, suffered many for a little profit, vain-glory, or vain hope, which we thought much to do for eternal glory? This we do, we strive, and labour, and take pains for vanity; we are temperate in all things, restrain and keep in our selves, for the obtaining sometimes a little credit, sometimes a little affection, or good opinion from some whose love or good opinion is worth nothing; or if it be, is as easily lost, as soon removed & changed from us, is commonly both corrupt and corruptible without ground, and to little purpose. But for Gods Judgment, Christs Affection, the Holy Spirits good Love to us, for the praise of good men, of Saints, and Angels, the whole choire of Heaven rejoycing over us: nay, for Heaven it self, and blessedness, and glory, all which we might obtain with the same pains, and lesser trouble, and in the same time, 'tis so little that we do, so far from all, that I may without injury stile it nothing.

But for Gods sake, for Christs sake, for our own sake, let it not be so for ever; let us not always prefer Glasse before Diamonds, Barley Conns before Pearls, pleasure, or profit, or honour before Heaven, and Happiness, and Glory. There are in Heaven unspeakable pleasures, whole Rivers of them there. There are in Heaven infinite and eternal riches, which we can neither fathom nor number; there is glory, and honour, and immortality, and eternal life. There are all these Crowns made incorruptible and everlasting, all running round, encircling one another like Crowns, encircling our souls and bodies too like Crowns, without end, without period. If we would have any Crowns, Honour, or Riches, or Pleasure, let us there seek them where they are advanced to an incorruptibility, made incorruptible, where the leaves are turned into everlasting fruit, incorruptible honour, incorruptible pleasure, incorruptible riches, incorruptible all. Let us but do for them, thus advanc'd and heightned, as we do for them when they are but fading and withering, and unsatisfying, and I say no more, but you will with as much ease obtain this incorruptible and immortal, as that mortal and corruptible. God grant us grace to do so, to strive for the mastery over our selves, and lusts, and sins, so to be temperate, abstemious, vigilant, and industrious in the pursuit of Heaven, as we are or have been of the earth, that we may at last be crowned not with a corruptible but an incorruptible crown of glory and everlasting life.

A
S E R M O N
O N T H E
Sixth Sunday in Lent.

D E U T. XXXii. 29.

*O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would
consider their latter end!*



And if we be *They*, who I am afraid we are, we are now in a good time to do it: *Lent* is a considering time. A Time set us by *holy Church* to consider what we have done all the year before, what we are to do all our years that are behind, and what we shall do, what will become of us if we do not, when all our years are at an end. It begins with a day of *Asbes*, and it goes out with a *week* we hear of nothing in but the preparations to a Grave and the Resurrection, so as it were to mind us of our latter end, make us more serious about it at this time than ordinary, from the first day of it to the last. So the Text is not unseasonable, nor the *wish* in it unfit any way for the time.

And whether this *Wish* be *Moses* his, or Gods, this *They* his own people, or their enemies, it is no matter. A good *Wish* it is from whomsoever to friend or enemy. Only it intimates, *They* are none of the wisest for whom it is.

For his own people it might well be. Them he had led out of the waste howling wilderness, *ver. 10*. Them he had kept there as the apple of his eye, as in the same *verse*; and when he brought them thence, fed them with the fat of Lambs, and the kidneys of wheat, *ver. 14*. And upon this, they grew fat and kickt, *ver. 15*. 'Tis a good *Wish* for *them*, that *They* were wiser.

For their Adversaries (2.) it might be as well. They had as little sense it seems, very ready to grow high at any time upon prosperities and successes, as if they, and not God, had done the business, *ver. 27*. 'Tis a good *Wish* for them, that they would understand a little better.

There's another people that we know (but I know not how to call
R r them,

them, his or I know not whose, they carry themselves so strangely, (I pray God it be not we at last) whom the Wish may suit as well as any. A people, who, some of them, not long since, were, as it were, in waists and defarts like Gods own People, (in a condition sad enough God knows) born thence no great while ago upon his wings, since that set high, and fed high with Corn, and Wine, and many good things else, who, for all that, have not well requited God that did it. Others of them, who, because *they came in no misfortune like other folk, nor were plagued like those other men*, stand much, like *Israels* enemies, upon their terms; their righteousness, or power, or policy, or somewhat did the work. Both are become too much unmindful of the Rock of their Salvation, as we have it, *ver. 15.* and have quite forgot to consider the latter end of things, what may be yet; that however things stand now, the foundations of the mountains may be set on fire again, as the Phrase is, *ver. 22.* if they be no wiser, either of them, than by continuance in sin to blow up the sparks; and then who can assure his house, or barns, or shop, or office at the next turn? 'Tis a good Wish for these too (both of them) that they would consider a little better on't together, *in novissimo, now at last.*

For all these it may be; and to be short and home, for all these it is; As in *Moses's* time for *Israel* and their enemies, so in Ours, for Us, late enemies, now friends together, that we would *all* be wiser once, *that we men*, at least at last, *would understand the loving kindness of the Lord, and consider the wonders that he hath done for the children of men.* But above all, that men would think of this same latter end, think that all things end not here, there is somewhat to be lookt to after these days are done, which wise men would look to, and provide for. *O Si, O that they would.* God wishes it, and *Moses* wishes it, and you and I, all of us, I hope, may wish what they do without offence. But do it we must besides, else God will complain of Us, as he does of Them here in the *Text.* For a kind of Complaint it is, as well as a Wish; *O Si, that they were,* a plain Complaint that they were not.

But be it a Wish, or be it a Complaint, (and both it is) a Wish for some, that they were wise, or a Complaint of them, that they are not, for three Particulars it is.

I. As a *wish*; 'tis that the men here spoken of (1.) *were wise.* That (2.) *they would understand this*, somewhat or other that we shall see anon worth understanding. That (3.) *they would especially consider their latter end.*

II. As a *Complaint*; it is for three things too that they vvere none of these, that they vvere neither *wise*, nor *Understood*, nor *Consider'd* vvhath they should. For *O Si*, is but a kind of a sigh that 'tis no other; a very trouble to God that men are no better.

Of both, this is the sum; that They vvhoh in the midst of mercies, after the sharp sense of former judgments, and not yet out of the fear of new ones, forget God, and either by new sins, or retrieving old ones, slight so both his judgments and his mercies, they are neither vwise nor understanding, nor considering men (vvhath ere they go for) but a sort that God vvill complain of (vvhoh ere they be) for somevvhath else, and vvishes to be vviser, to understand a little better, and consider novv at last, lest the latter end be vvorse vvith them than the beginning.

That it may not, but that the Wish may take effect, and God have no
more

more reason to complain. Let us now consider the Particulars ; where I must first shew you for whom, before I shew you for what it is. And yet I know not how you'll take it.

I. Indeed that *Israels* enemies, the *Heathen*, should be a Nation void of counsel, that have not any understanding in them, *ver. 28.* that I believe may be taken well enough.

But (2.) that *Israel*, Gods own people, should be of the number, they a foolish people and unwise as it is, *ver. 6.*

And that not the meanest of them neither, but they that eat the fat, and drink the sweet, *ver. 14.* the best (as we would say) of the Parish, who are always wise because they are rich, that *they* should not understand.

Those (3.) who ride upon the high places of the earth, *ver. 13.* the chiefeest persons, that men in honour should have no understanding. 'Tis well *Moses* says it ; I know not whether it be safe to say it after him.

But (4.) that wise men too, not the ignorant only, but they, whose wits God seems to be afraid of, *ver. 27.* and dares do nothing for them, for fear they should misapply it, who (let God do what he can, say what he will) will say and prove any thing good against him ; who are always giving reason upon reason for every thing, but why they reason him out of all, that They should come into the tale ; that we, or any body, or God himself should wish them wise (as if they were not as wise as we could wish them) what an affront does this simple *Moses* put upon them ? Why, Lord, who does understand if they do not ? Or who will believe us if we say it ?

And yet all These are They the Wish is for. Gods enemies are fools, and Gods people not so wise says our blessed Saviour, *St. Luke xvi 8.* The gallantest, the richest, the wisest of them not so wise always as they should be ; not so wise, I hope, at any time, but God may have leave to wish them wiser.

Yea, every one of them, every mothers child, if they have learnt no more than they here in the *Chapter* ; learnt nothing by their afflictions, but to forget them ; nothing by their deliverances, but to abuse them ; nothing by what is past but to be discontent with the present, and yet daily powre out themselves into excesses, and never think of what may come. If this be all the wise parts they play, as they were theirs in the *Text* (be they who they will) they are they God means, God make them wiser. The Wish now is like I fear to fit the Persons as well as it does the Time. And three Points there are in it I told you to be learnt. *Sapere, Intelligere, & Novissima Providere.* To call to mind the things that are past ; To understand the things that are ; And to provide for things to come. To remember where we were, To understand where we are, and to consider and provide for where we may be, the three main Points of Wisdom ; So *St. Augustine* distinguishes the three words as the three main parts of wisdom, and so shall I. But (1.) consider them as our duty ; and then (2.) as Gods desire.

Sapere, or to be wise, that's the first. And *Sapientia est per quam repetit animus quæ fuerunt* : So that learned *Father*, To be wise is to call to mind the things that are already past, and the great *Roman Orator* I may tell you takes the words so too.

And truly *Moses* himself seems so to mean it ; For no sooner had he called this people foolish and unwise, *ver. 6.* but in the next words

immediately he bids them remember the days of old, and consider the years of many Generations, as if that were the way to make them wise. Indeed, if we be but of yesterday, or look no further back, *Job* will quickly tell us we know nothing, *Job* viii. 9. *State super vias antiquas*, that's the Rule God gives us, *Jer.* vi. 16. On the *old* ways *ther's* the standing, no foundation to build on else. New opinions and devices are but a kind of standing upon our own heads; we cannot stand so long; a building upon a tottering and boggy ground, which vents it self ordinarily into vapours, that make a noise and blustering, darken and infect the air and nothing else. Every wind, too, carries them which way it will, this way, or that way, or any way; and, observe it when you will, once out of the old way, and they ne'r know where to fix.

Yet (2.) *to be wise*, has here a notion more practical, and sends us sadly and soberly to meditate now and then upon the late condition we were in. And surely, where God found us, and how he found us, how he led us about, and how he instructed us, how he kept us all the while as the apple of his eye, how he flutter'd over us with his wings, how he spread them abroad and bore us on them, (I keep the expressions of the *Chapter*, for *Israels* case was much our own) or to speak out, the desolations, and poverities, and distresses, and reproaches we were in; the prisons, the dangers, the necessities we escapt; the supplies, the reliefs, the protections we found (we know not how) are not things would be forgotten; they are such, as (one would think) would make one wise. They would be written upon our walls, and beams, and posts, and doors; written with a Pen of Iron, and with the point of a Diamond, graven upon the Tables of our hearts, and upon the horns of our Altars, or (as *Job* speaks) upon the rock for ever. Our Churches, our Halls, our Chambers, all our Rooms hung round with the sad stories we have seen, to make them live in our memories, and in our childrens after us, to make them wise by their fathers sufferings.

And yet (3.) *to be wise* is more still: To make these things live in our lives as well as memories, to grow good upon it. *To be wise, and to do good* the *Psalmist* joyns, *Psal.* xxxvi. 3. Indeed, they cannot be asunder. He is not vvise vvho is not good. To keep my Lavvs and do them, this is your vvifdom, and your understanding; the vvay to make the Nations say, *This is a wise and understanding people*. So God determines it, *Deut.* iv. 6.

Indeed, I come not hither to preach other vvifdom, I should make my preaching foolishness then, indeed, in a truer sense than the *Apostle* meant it. The Wisdom of God (if vve can keep to it) that's our business. And he (1.) that hearkens to it, he is vvise says the vvifest *Solomon*, *Prov.* xii. 15. He (2.) vvho exalted from that lovv condition, vve vvare speaking of, to a high one, is lovvly still, he is vvise, says he again, *Prov.* xi. 2. He (3.) vvho upon the same accompt keeps himself under still, keeps under Discipline and Government as if he felt the former lashes still, he is vvise. *Apprehendite disciplinam*, is a Point of holy *Dauids* *Nunc ergo sapite*, of the vvifdom he commends, *Psal.* ii. 11.

But if you vvill be vvise, indeed, and pardon me that I extend Wisdom a little further than I first propounded it, There are four things that are exceeding wise, *Prov.* xxx. 24. you may learn it of. *The Ants*, that prepare their meat in the Summer. *The Conies*, that make their houses in the Rock. *The Locusts*, that go forth all of them by bands. And the *Spider*, that takes hold with her hands, and is in Kings Palaces. Were vve but as vvise as they,

as

as Ants, and Conies, and Locusts, and Spiders (and 'tis a shame we should not) we would by the experience of our former evils: Prepare (1.) in good days with the Ant, for bad ones. We would (2.) with the Conies build our dwellings in the Rock St. Paul says was Christ; having felt sufficiently already there is no sure building else. We would (3.) go forth, as the Locusts do, to gather all by bands, unite in the bond of peace and charity, not straggle into factions, and divide in parties, remembering what that lately came to, and may quickly come to again if we look not to it. We would (4.) with the Spider, catch hold with our hands, keep our selves employed in our own business, trades, or studies, and not meddle with things we either understand not, or belong not to us. We would learn of them besides to be in the palaces of the great King, the houses of God a little more constantly than we are. This would be to be exceeding wise.

And if to these we add the wisdom of the Serpent, as our blessed Saviour commends it to us, St. Mark x. 16. make it our care above all (as they say the Serpent does) to save our heads, *Caput Christum*, and *Caput Regem*, Christ our head, and the King our Head, make it our business to keep our Religion and obedience safe. Be who will else thought never so wise, I am sure there is none wiser, as God counts wisdom, than they that do so.

Yet lastly, if you had rather take the rule of your wisdom from above, take it from St. James, That wisdom (says he) is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisie*, St. James iii. 17. So to be wise, is to wash our hands of what is past, to live peaceably and orderly, friendly and kindly together for the time to come, heartily promoting one anothers good, without grudging or dissembling. For in returning and quietness, it seems, is the Apostles wisdom, as well as the Prophets strength, Isa. xxx. 15. wisdom it seems and strength both. I would some would understand it, that, or this, nay, that and this, we are to consider next. The condition we are in, that 'tis we are now to understand. For *Intelligentia perspicit quæ sunt*, so St. Augustin defines it, and this *hoc* is most naturally the present. So to understand this, (which is the second particular in the wish) is, to be truly sensible how things now go with us. Where (1.) what it is we are to understand, and then what it is to understand it.

What *this* is we take in two particulars: Gods dealing with us, and our dealing with him again. These two, the *this*, the business we are wish'd to understand.

I. And how God deals with us, the high places of the earth we ride on, ver. 13. the places and offices we enjoy, the increase of the Fields we eat of, the plenty we abound with, the Honey we suck out of the rock, and the oil that issued to us out of the flinty rock, the same verse, those blessings which we could no more expect than those sweet dews out of stones and flints, the butter and milk, ver. 14. the smoothness and evenness of our conditions now, the fat of lambs, and rams, and goats in the next words; the full tables we well nigh groan at, and the pure blood of the grape, the mirth and jollity we live in tell us as plain, I say, how he deals with us as they did Israel how he dealt with them. One day tells another, how the Almighty commands it to dart blessings on us, and one night certifies another, how he enjoys it to shadow us with protections, both speak loud enough to have their voices heard among us.

But how (2.) we deal with him again. I would there were no voice abroad,

abroad, I would nobody heard, I would *Gath* did not speak it, nor the streets of *Askelon* ring of it, that the day might be clouded with darkness to cover it, and that the night were as the shadow of death to bury it for ever: that thou, O God however, wouldst not reckon the days of our ingratitude in the number of our months. We are surrounded with plenty, and we abuse it to excess. We are encompassed with peace, and we disturb it with petty quarrels. We are loaded with wealth and riches, and we lash them out in lusts and vanities. We are clothed with honours, and we dishonour them with meannesses. Our friends are given into our bosoms, and we envy some of them, and slight the rest. Our Laws are restored us, and we live as if we had none. Our Religion is returned, and we laugh it out of countenance. Good discipline reviving, and we are doing what we can to break the bonds in sunder. Our Churches now stand open to us, and we pass by them with neglect. Our King God has set upon his holy Hill, and the people still imagin vain things against him. In a word, we are filled with all good things, and we do all the evil we can with them. We fill up our days with iniquities, and our nights with transgressions. We neither consider Gods dealings, nor mind our own. We understand neither that nor this.

For to understand this (which is the second branch of this particular) is to understand both whence and whither these mercies are, whence they come, and whither they tend.

For the first we are too ready to say with the Heathen, *ver. 27. Our hand is high, and God hath not done it.* God hath not done it; why, tell me then (I pray) what were the counsels that brought things about? where were the Armies that forced our passage? whence the mony that smooth'd the way? who confounded the devices, who fettered the forces? who divided the strengths that were against us? who turned the hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the hearts of the Children to the Fathers? who softned our enemies? who strengthened our friends? who suppld strangers at last to pity us? who calm'd the Seas? who held the winds? who guided our happiness into our harbours, and even threw it into our bosoms? This Cloud, that arose like *Eliab's* out of the Sea, *1 Kings xviii. 44.* out of the vast Sea of Gods endless mercy, and covered Heaven, and Earth with blessings (till we are grown black, I fear sadly black and sinful with them) it was not as his servant took it, like a mans hand at all, it was like Gods all the way, it was meerly Gods, *Non nobis* therefore *Domine non nobis*, must be our Psalm, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name only be the glory.* And this the first way to understand his mercies, to confess from him they come, and so give him thanks.

The second is, to learn also whether they tend. They are in *St. Pauls* understanding to lead us to repentance, *Rom. ii. 4.* (and the time is proper for it.) In the Psalmists, to understand well is to do thereafter, *Psal. cxi. 10.* So to understand Gods blessings right well, is to use them right well. And when under blessings we live accordingly, take them thankfully, use them soberly, employ them charitably, then, and not till then we understand them.

Yet lastly, I must add, that till we think we have no understanding, till we confess we are (what God says we are in the words just before) a Nation that has none, a Nation that when time was, undid it self with its own wisdom, whilst we would needs teach God to govern his Church, and rule the world, and in a manner force him either to make the world anew again *out of nothing*, or make the Church

Church into it ; till we grow sensible how wisely we reformed all till we had reformed God out of *all*, and all into *Atheism*, and confusion ; and that we are no wiser still then to tread in the same steps that will do it again, there will be little hope we understand Gods dealings or our own. Yet this understanding our not understanding God here particularly points them to ; for having immediately before said, this people, they were a Nation that had not any understanding, he presently adds, *O that they were wise and understood it*, even *this* very thing in particular, that they do not understand, as wise as they seem, or think themselves. The next point may make them wiser if however now at last they will *consider their latter end*. What may be the end both of their follies, and their wisdoms here, and what is like to be the end of them hereafter ; what in this world, and what in the other ; for *Novissima* reaches both, the issues of this life and the issues of the next. *Et novissima providerent.*

III. Several latter ends there are of both sorts, to be considered ; but how things may notwithstanding the fair face they carry, end yet here e're long, that consider first. And that I shall tell you without stirring out of the *Chapter*, for God tells us it there himself : (1.) He *will set on fire the foundations of the mountains*, ver. 22. if we be no wiser than we have been yet. The highest mountains of our honours, the greatest mountains of our strengths, nay, the firmest foundations we can build on shall fall all into ashes, and scatter into smoke and air.

Or (2.) burning heat, and bitter destruction shall devour us, *ver. 24.* even our zeal and bitterness against one another shall raise such flames as shall consume us all together, *High and low, rich and poor, one with another.*

Or (3.) he will send the teeth of beasts upon us, with the poison of the Serpents of the dust, *ver. 24.* again ; set the beasts of the people again to tear and worry us : nay, even the most contemptible persons, the vermine of the dust, they shall devour us. They shall creep like Serpents into our Families, poison them with errors, poison with sin., poison them with lusts, multiply too there like dust, and destroy us e're we dream on't.

Or, if we escape that, the sword (4.) without, and the terror within shall destroy the young man, and the Virgin, the suckling, and the man of gray hairs, *ver. 25.* nor young, nor old escape the second bout.

Or (5.) He will scatter us into corners, *ver. 26.* but they shall not hide and shelter us as before ; our very remembrance he shall make to cease, we shall come no more out, *ver. 26.* Not so much as an ear, or leg, as the *Prophet* speaks, *Amos iii. 12.* taken out of the Lions mouth to remember us by. But a *populus non populus*, a people that we count as nothing, shall possess our room, *ver. 21.* any thing, every thing that will but serve to root us out.

Some of these, nay, all these lastly, and more shall come upon us, heaps of mischiefs, *ver. 23.* and all the arrows of the Almighty, till they be spent, as in the same *verse*, if we be no wiser than we have been hitherto, if we understand no better how to use either our bad days or our good ones. And if after not only so many fair warnings, but so many fair enjoyments, we carelessly throw away our selves into our former miseries, we shall also die like fools ; and who can be such to pity us ?

That all these have not befallen us before this time, that God has not torn up our foundations, nor given us over to our own wraths, nor to the peoples, that he has not scattered us, nor brought some ill end or other upon us long e're this ; 'tis not for our righteousness, I am sure : but *ne hostes*

hostes dicerent, ver. 27. lest some should justify their own dealings, or *ne populus diceret*, lest some others condemn Gods, as if he had delivered them only to destroy them. But what e're they say, *Ego retribuam eis in tempore*, their foot shall slide in due time, says God, & *juxta est dies perditionis*, the day of their calamity is at hand, ver. 35.

But if we escape all these, there are four other latter ends that must be thought on; Death and Judgment, Hell and Heaven: the *quatuor novissima*, that every body can tell, but few consider; yet the two first of them we cannot avoid, and one of the other we must come to.

And (1.) suppose our prosperity and splendor should go with us to the Grave (and we can carry them no further) yet after we have lived like Gods to come to die like men, to be shaken with Agues, or burnt with Fevers, or torn with Cholicks, or swoln with Gouts, or groan away in pain, or go out in stench, (every body glad when we are gone) and at our going to be stript of all our gallantry with a *stulte cujus hac?* Thou fool, whose are all these things thou must leave behind? to be sent away with so scornful a farewell, into rottenness and putrefaction, and so be blown into dust, and vanish into oblivion, like the meanest men, or perhaps which is far more terrible to be pluckt away in the heat and violence of a sin, and none to deliver is, is but a sad end of all our jollities and glories.

Yet hence (2.) to be drawn to the last Tribunal (that's the next stage we come to) there to have our follies fully laid open to the eyes of all the world, not a night-folly hid, where we must give an account of every hour and minute spent, every word and thought as well as work: after all our blustering here to be dragged thither to a reckoning for every farthing, even to the last mite, and receive accordingly, how bad so e're it be: This will set us to consider, sure, what we shall answer at that day, how to give up our accounts with joy, and come off with glory.

For we end not yet, there is still a latter end beyond both these; two for fail: and 'tis yet within your choice, which you will come to. *Novissima cæli*, or *Novissima inferni*. The highest Heaven, or the lowest Hell. This last we have, ver. 22. and that we will take first. 'Tis better ending with the t'other.

For this, 'tis a place whence joy is ever banish'd, and where no good is; where nothing but sorrow, and sadness, and horror dwells: where the wicked lie wrapt in flames, and Sulphur, covered with worms, and stench, and darkness. All the racks and tortures that the wit of cruelty ever found out here, are beds of Down and Roses to those horrid lodgings. Here in the bitterest pains there is some part or other well, or somewhat or other always to be found to give us ease. The light will chear us, or the night refresh us, or sleep give us rest. Company will divert the anguish, or custom lighten it, or hope lessen it, or time wear it out. But in that place of torment (so *Dives* called and felt it) nor soul, nor body, nor faculty, nor member free. The conscience of former sins, that terrifies them; the memories of former happines, that distracts them, the understanding now what they have forfeited and might have had, that above all infinitely torments them. The tongue burns, and the teeth gnash, and the heart trembles, and the eyes weep, and the hands wail, and the ears are filled with continual screeches, and everlasting howlings, and every member is intolerably tortured with the punishment of its own sins: and yet not so much there as a drop of water to refresh 'um, not a gleam of light to comfort 'um, no rest day nor night. The company
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of Devils, and damned spirits, (the only company there) and amongst them (perhaps) their dearest friends, or Wives, or Children, infinitely increase their hell; and all is augmented by continuance: for no such thing as hope to be heard of there. 'Tis the Kingdom of despairs and terrors, *The worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*: all the miseries are everlasting, everlasting. This the latter end of all the people that forget God, says holy *David*, that forget him in their prosperities; into Hell they shall be turned, *Psal. ix. 17.*

Nor is this the melancholy mans dream, or the contrivance of the Politician, or the Priests cheat to keep men in awe. If a cheat it be, 'tis God has cheated you, and *Christ* has cheated you, and the *Prophets* have cheated you, and the *Apostles* have cheated you, for they all say the same thing; And would the rantingest of those brave fellows that scoff at it, sit down a little and consider, (which I am sure they never do) or should the tremblings of death begin to seize them, when their understandings are about them (which are not always) and open the windows into another world, then these would be *the words of truth and soberness*, then, *men and brethren, what shall we do* (when commonly 'tis too late.) How shall we do with these everlasting burnings? we will do any thing, suffer any thing to avoid them.

Then Heaven too, the end we reserved for our last, *that* will begin to be thought on too, and how to get in there. There, where is joy without any sad look to shadow it; pleasure without any tang to stain it; peace without disturbance, plenty without satiety, continual health without infirmity, nor grief, nor fear, nor hazzard to impair our happiness, or sully it. *Glorious, all glorious things are spoken of thee, (Thou City of God.)* Gold, and Pearls, and Diamonds, and all precious Stones; Kingdoms, and Thrones, and Crowns, and Scepters; torrents of Joy, rivers of Pleasure, vvell-springs of Life, dvvellings of Glory, seats of blessedness, and blessed company, the Throne of God, all are said of thee, thou glorious place. And yet vwhen all is said, vve must conclude vvith the Apostle, that *neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things prepared there*, or if they had, it seems it is not lawvful for a man to utter them, *2 Cor. xii. 4.* So I must needs leave them to you to consider them.

And truly 'tis time novv to tell you vvhat considering is. (1.) 'Tis to sit down and lay your ends together, and think upon them. Consider then seriously (1.) vvwhether you vvould have your foundations once more unsetled, your houses plundered, your estates sequestred (they are scurvy vvords, pray pardon them) your glories once again trod to dirt: Whether 'tis good making ventures, trying Gods severities the second time. For let them smite you but once more, and as *Abisba* said to *David*, so say I to you, they vvill not smite you the second time.

Consider again, (2.) vvwhether seeing howvever you must leave all these enjoyments, within so short a span of time as death is off us, (and vve may be fetcht off the stage e're vve are avvare, ill provided for it) it be vvifdom to lay up all our treasure and provision here; either so hoard up here as if it vv ere for ever, or so lavish here as if it vv ere to accompt for never.

And seeing to that accompt vve must come at last, consider (3.) vvwhether such *Imprimis's* and *Items* as the long impertinent Bills of sins and pleasures vvill bring in, vvill pass current at the last Audit; vvwhether so much in purple and fine linen, so much in living sumptuously every day,

so little time in the assemblies of devotion, and so much in those of vanity: whether, *Soul take thy ease, eat, drink, and be merry*, the living in all liberty and licentiousness; the being hateful, and the hating one another will pass for a rewarding the Almighty for his mercies, when, *Come ye blessed, go ye cursed*, come in to conclude the day.

And if they will not pass so (as no doubt they will not) consider (4.) what will be next the end you come to, and remember but half that I have told you of those eternal fires (and I have told you nothing in comparison) and then tell me again whether the strictest attendances of piety, the largest expences of charity, the trouble now and then of doing well, the beggarliness of honesty, the restraints of temperance, the niceness of chastity, the very hardships of repentance, watching, fasting, weeping, even the greatest penances of Religion, as high as the rigours and austerities of *Hermits* and *Anchorets* be not far easier to be endured, and whether we can be thought wise any way, if we omit any way to prevent those flames.

Or if you had rather be led with hopes and glory (as all ingenuous and noble natures had) consider (5.) whether all the glories ye have liv'd in, all the satisfaction ye have met with, all the delights ye have ever here enjoyed, or ever can, be worth one minute of those eternal fulnesses in Gods presence in the Heavens; when even they that counted the Religious mans life, but madness, *wisdom* v. 4. and laugh piety and honesty out of doors, were so amaz'd at the glory and strangeness of the righteous mans salvation, so far beyond all that they looked for, *ver.* 2. that they even groan'd for anguish of spirit, and cry'd out openly, *we fools*, we fools indeed, how have we cheated our selves of Heaven, the glorious Kingdom, whilst the poor *Lazarus's*, these poor contemptible things crept in, and we with all our pride, and riches, and vaunting quite shut out, *ver.* 8.

And now I may read the *Text* another way, as an assertion, not a wish: and I find it read so. Thus, *Si saperent & intelligerent & providerent*. If men were wise, they would both understand and consider all these things without this ado. They would presently turn *considerarent* into *providerent* too, (and so the word is rendred by the *vulgar*) and provide now for their latter end. And the provision will not stand us in much, nor shall I stand long upon it. Three ways to do it, and you have all.

The Son of *Syrach's* (1.) *Remember thy end, and let enmity cease*, says he, *Ecclus.* xxviii. 6. Let us not spend our wits, our courage, our estates any longer in feuds and enmities, seeing God has now at length so strangely brought us all altogether.

The (2.) way shall be his too, with a little alteration, *Ecclus.* vii. 36. *Remember thy latter end*, and that thou never henceforward do amiss. I know 'tis read, remember and thou shalt not, but 'tis as true if read, remember and thou wilt not: if you consider it as you should, you will also provide you sin no more.

To make all sure, make the provision our Blessed Saviour would have you for a third. *Provide the bags that wax not old*, *St. Luke* xii. 33. friends that will not fail you, make them to you out of the *Mammon* you have gotten, make the poor your friends with it, *That when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations*, *S. Luke* xvi. 9.

And consider lastly for the close of this part of the *Text* (and I am almost at the close of all) that all this is Gods desire. He wishes it here,
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he wishes it all the holy *Text* through, *Oh that there were such an heart in them*, Deut. v. 29. O that my people would hearken to it, *Psal.* lxxxii. 14. O that men would therefore, *Psal.* cvii. four times in it.

II. And yet the second general of the *Text* tells you, he does more; wishes it so heartily, that he complains again: complains they answer not his wishes. And wisht he has so often, that he may well complain. *How often have I*, says he, St. *Luke* xiii. 34. so often nor they nor we can tell it. Only so often *Noluisse*, as often as he would, so often they would not. All the day long he had stretched out his hand unto them, sent to them by his messengers, early and late, to desire them, visited them with judgments, courted them with mercies, and yet they would not, disobedient and gain-saying people that they were. And therefore complain he does, that do what he can, he must give them up, though with a *Quomodo te tradam*? Hos. xi. 8. with great regret and sorrow, give them up for fools, men of neither understanding, nor consideration; men that like fools throw away Gold for baubles, men that are so far from understanding or considering, that they live as if they car'd not whether they went to Heaven or Hell.

But I love not to lengthen out complaints,; in this case I should ne're have done: and 'tis time I should. And the *Text* only insinuating, not enlarging Gods complaints, gives me an *item* to do so too. Only give me leave in brief to sum up all.

Every wise man before at any time he begins a work, sits down and considers what he has to do, and to what end he does it. O that we would be so wise in ours; that we would retire our selves some minutes now and then to consider the ill courses at any time we are in (or entering on.) And when we are got into our Chambers, and be still thus commune with our selves.

What is this business I am about? to what purpose is this life I lead, this sin, this waste, this vanity, Am I grown so soon forgetful of my late sad condition, or so insensible of my late rebellions, and of the pardon God has given me, as thus impudently to sin again? Is this the reward I make him for all his mercies, thus one after another to abuse them still? or is it that I am weary of my happiness, and grown so wanton as to tempt destruction? Is it that I may go with more dishonour to my Grave, leave a blot upon my name, and stand upon record for a fool, or worse, to all posterity for ever? Is it that I have not already sinned enough, but I must thus foolishly still burthen my accompts? Is it that I may go the more gloriously to Hell, and damn my self the deeper? Is it that I may purposely thwart God in all his ways of mercy and judgment, cross his desires, scorn his entreaties, defie his threats, despise his complaints, anger him to the heart, that I may be rid of him, and quit my hands of all my interests in Heaven for ever. Why this is the English of my sins, my profaneness, and debaucheries, the courses I am in, or now going upon: and will I still continue them?

This would be considering indeed, and a few hours thus spent sometimes would make us truly wise. And let us but do so, we shall quickly see the effect of them, God shall have his wishes, and we shall be wise, and we shall have ours too, all we can wish or hope, and no complaining in our streets. All our former follies shall be forgotten, and all ill ends be far off from us; and when these days shall have an end, we shall then go to our Graves in peace, to our Accompts with joy, and passing by (some of us perhaps) even the gates of Hell, come happily to the end

of all our hopes, the salvation of our souls, have our end, glory, and honour, and immortality, and eternal life; where we, as *Daniel* tells us the wise do, shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever.

Whether he bring us, who is the eternal Wisdom of his Father, Jesus Christ; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, three Persons, and one Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, and only Wise God, be all Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing for ever and ever.

10th Sept

1818

Bath

A Ser-

A
S E R M O N
ON THE
ANNUNTIATION
OF THE
Blessed Virgin Mary.

St. LUKE i. 28.

And the Angel came in unto her, and said, Hail thou that art highly favoured, The Lord is with thee, Blessed art thou among women.



He day will tell you who this *Blessed among women* is, we call it our *Lady-day*; And the *Text* will tell you why she comes into the day, because the *Angel* to day came in to her. And the *Angel* will tell you why he to day came in to Her; she was *highly favoured*, and the *Lord* was with her, was to come himself this day into her, to make her the most *blessed among women*, sent him only before to tell her so, to tell her, he would be with her by and by himself.

This makes it *Annunciation day*, the *Annunciation of the Virgin Mary*, as the *Church* calls it, and the *Annunciation* to her, as we may call it too: The *Annunciation* or announcing and proclaiming of Christ unto her, that he was this day to be *Incaruate* of her, to take that flesh to day upon him in the womb, which he was some nine months hence on *Christmas-day* to bring with him into the world. And (2.) the *Annunciation* or announcing, that is proclaiming of her *blessed among, above women* by it, by being thus *highly favoured* by her Lords thus coming to her. A day upon these grounds fit to be remembred and announced or proclaimed unto the World.

Indeed, *Dominus tecum* is the chief business, the Lord Christs being with her, that which the *Church* especially commemorates in the day. Her being *blessed*, and all our being blessed, highly favoured, or favoured at all, either mens or womens being so, all our hail, all our health,
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and peace, and joy, all the *Angels* visits to us, or kind words, all our Conferences with heaven, all our titles and honours in heaven and earth, that are worth the naming come only from it. For *Dominus tecum* cannot come without them; He cannot come to us but we must be so, must be highly favoured in it, and blessed by it. So the *Incarnation* of Christ, and the *Annunciation* of the *Blessed Virgin*, his being incarnate of her, and her blessedness by him, and all our blessednesses in him with her make it as well our *Lords* as our *Ladies day*. More his, because his being *Lord* made her a *Lady*, else a poor *Carpenters Wife*, God knows; all her worthiness and honour, as all ours, is from him; and we to take heed to *day*, or any day, of parting them; or so remembering her as to forget him; or so blessing her, as to take away any of our blessing him; any of his worship to give to her; Let her blessedness, the respect we give her, be *inter mulieres, among women* still: such as is fit and proportionate to weak creatures, not due and proper only to the *Creator*, that *Dominus tecum*, Christ in her be the business: that we take pattern by the *Angel*, to give her no more than is her due, yet to be sure to give her that though, and that particularly upon the *day*. And yet the *day* being a day of *Lent* seems somewhat strange, 'Tis surely no fasting work, no business or occasion of sadness this; What does it then, or how shall we do it then in *Lent*, a time of fast and sorrow? Fast and feast too: how can we do it? A Feast it is to *day*, a great one, Christ's *Incarnation*, a day of joy, if ever any: and *Lent* a time of sorrow and repentance: a great one, the greatest Fast of any; How shall we reconcile them? Why thus, The news of Joy never comes so seasonable as in the midst of sorrow; news of one coming to save us from our sins can never come more welcome to us than even then when we are sighing and groaning under them: never can *Angel* come more acceptably than at such time, with such a message, as *All Hail, thou art highly favoured, blessed art thou*; 'Tis the time that *Angels* use to come when we are fasting: So to *Daniel*, *Dan. ix. 3, 21*. So to *Cornelius*, *Acts x. 30*. the time when we best hear a voice from heaven, and best understand it with *St. Peter*, *Acts x. 13, 15, 16, 20*. the time when God himself vouchsafes to spread our Table, as he did there of all kinds of beasts and fowls, to *St. Peter*, all heavenly food and mysteries. 'Tis the very time for *gratia plena*, to be fill'd when we are empty; the only time for *Dominus tecum*, for our *Lords* being with us when we have most room to entertain him. So nor the *Church*, nor we in following it, are any whit out of order. *Dominus tecum*, Christ is the main business, both of our Fasts and Feasts: and 'tis the greatest order to attend his business in the *day*, and way we meet it, be it what it will.

Though perhaps it seem stranger too to hear of an *Angel* coming into a *Virgins* Chamber, at midnight, (as is conjectured) and there saluting her. But no fear of those Sons of God if they come in unto the daughters of men. *Angels* are *Virgins*, may be with *Virgins*, in the privatest Closets, are always with them there to carry up their Prayers, and to bring down blessings. No strange thing then to hear of an *Angel* with any of them whom God highly favours, with whom himself is too: no wonder to hear of an *Angel* or *Ave* to any such. The only wonder indeed to us will be to hear of an *Ave Mary*. Indeed I cannot my self but wonder at it, as they use it now, to see it turn'd into a Prayer. 'Twas never made for Prayer, or Praise, a meer *Salutation*; the *Angels* here to the *blessed Virgin* never intended it, I dare say, for other, either to praise her with, or pray unto her.

her. And I shall not consider it as such, I am only for the *Angels Ave*, not the *Popish Ave Marie*, I can see no such in the *Text*.

Nor should I scarce, I confess, have chosen such a *Theam* to day, though the Gospel reach it me, but that I see 'tis time to do it when our Lord is wounded through our Ladies sides; both our Lord and the mother of our Lord most vilely spoken of by a new generation of wicked men, who, because the *Romanists* make little less of her than a *Goddeſs*, they make not so much of her as a good woman; because they bless her too much, these unbleſs her quite, at least will not suffer her to be blessed as she should. To avoid both these extremes we need no other pattern but the *Angels*, who here salutes, and blesses her indeed; yet so only salutes and blesses her, so speaks of and to her as to a woman here, though much above the best of them; one highly favoured, 'tis true, yet but favoured still; all her grace, and blessedness, and glory still no other, meer favour and no more, and *Dominus tecum*, the Lords being with her, the ground, and source, and sum of all; *Virgin* and *Day* both blessed thence. The better to give all their due, *Angel*, and *Lord*, and *Lady*, and you the better understanding of the *Text*, the scope, and matter, and full meaning of it, we shall consider in the words these two Particulars: The *Angels Visitation*, and the *Angels Salutation*.

I. His *Visitation*, or coming to her in these words: *And the Angel came in unto her*.

II. His *Salutation* to her, or saluting her, in these, *Hail thou that art highly favoured; The Lord is with thee, Blessed, &c.*

In the *Visitation* we have,

(1.) The Visitor. (2.) The Visited. (3.) The Visiting. The Angel, the Visitor, He. The blessed Virgin, this the Visited, Her: And the Visiting, his coming in unto her.

In the *Salutation* there is to be considered both the Form of it, and the Titles in it.

1. The Form threefold: (1.) *Hail*. (2.) *The Lord is with thee*. (3) *Blessed art thou*, or be thou blessed, *Su benedicta*, it may be, as well as *es*.

2. The Titles given her, they three too: *Thou that art highly favoured*, that's one. *Blessed thou*, that's another. *Blessed among women*, that's the third. These all so evident and so plain, that none can miss them; But to these two Points two more are to be added, The Grounds and Bounds of these great titles.

1. The Ground of this high blessedness and favour: (1.) *Full of grace*, so our old *Translation*, and the old *Latine* render it, her fulness of grace and goodness, that's one. (2.) But *the Lord is with thee*, that's the main, thence all her blessedness, thereby it is that she is so highly favoured, because the Lord is with her.

2. The Bounds or Limitation of these titles, they come first with a *χαρις*, no other form then what is and hath been given unto men; though great they be, yet divine they be not. The greatest Title secondly is but *κατασκευασμένη* from meer grace and favour. Thirdly, It must still too acknowledge *Dominus tecum*. She hath a Lord, is a Subject as well as we. And lastly, All her blessedness is but *inter mulieres*, among women; how much soever she excels all women, she is but *inter mulieres*, among such Creatures, in the rank of Creatures, no *Goddeſs*, nor partner vvith the *Godhead*, either in title or vvorship.

By considering and laying all these Points together vve shall both vindicate the *blessed Virgins* honour, as vvell from all superstitious as prophane

prophane abuses, and our selves from all neglect of any duty to the mother of our Lord, one so highly favoured, and blessed by him, whilst we give her all that either Lord or Angel gave her, but yet dare not give her more.

And now *Dominus mecum*, and *Dominus vobiscum* too, the Lord be with me whilst I am speaking it, and with you whilst you are hearing it, and bless us both whilst we are about it, that we may learn to bless where we should bless, whom, and when, and how to do it, and rightly both accept and apply God's blessings and our own.

We are now to learn it from the Angel, his visiting and blessing the blessed Virgin here. His visit and his Salutation to her. But his visit, or visitation, that stands first. Where the visiter, the visited, and his visit, the Angel, the Virgin, and his coming into unto her are all to be considered. *And the Angel came in unto her.*

And who so fit as an Angel to come into her, to give this visit, to give this blessing? It was a bad Angel that brought the curse, upon the woman, 'twas fit a good one should bring the blessing.

The imployment (2.) suits none so well. 'Twas news of joy who could bring it better, than one of those who were the first sons of eternal joy, the first enjoyers of it, who could pronounce it better?

Who fitter (3.) to come with a *Dominus tecum*, before the face of the Lord, with a message of his coming down to earth, than they who always behold his face in heaven, St. Mat. xviii. 10.

Who fitter (4.) to come to her, she was an immaculate and unspotted Virgin, and to whom do Virgins Chambers lie ope at midnight but to Angels? God sends no other thither at that time of night, and that that time it was may be well conjectured from *Wisdom* xviii. 14, 15. *When all things were in quiet silence, and that night was in the midst of her swift course; Thine Almighty Word came down from Heaven*, then it seems was the time of her Conception, of Christs coming to her, before whom immediately the Angel came to bring the message that he was a coming, if, as St. Bernard says, he were not come already.

And (5.) with such a message to a Virgin, as that she should conceive, without a man, who was convenient to bring it but an Angel? *Ne quo degere depravaret affectu*, says St. Ambrose, that there might not be the least ground of a false suspicion.

But (6.) to such a Virgin, one so highly favour'd as to be made the mother of God (for the mother of Christ is no less, he being God) what messenger could come less than an Angel? Prophets and Patriarchs were too little for so great an embassy, and Angels never came upon a greater.

Nay, (7.) every Angel neither was not fit for so high an Office: The Angel Gabriel it was, he is the ἀγγελος here. Gabriel is by St. Hierom, and St. Gregory interpreted *Fortitudo Dei*, the Power or strength of God, and in this work it appear'd indeed. Gods strength and power never so much shewn as in the saving of us by Christ. It is by others (2.) interpreted *Vir Deus*, or *Deus nobiscum*, God man, or God with us. Could any be thought fitter to bring this news upon his lips, than he that carries it in his name? Especially (3.) being the same that foretold all this to Daniel, Dan. ix. 21. fit that he should see to the performance who brought the promise. (4.) Petrus Damiani thinks he was the holy Virgins Guardian Angel, proper therefore to bring her this good message, or any else. (5.) God had several times employed him before, to Daniel, Zachary, and others, and found him

him faithful, he therefore now employs him still, that we may know, he that is faithful in the least God will by degrees trust him with the most, the greatest matters.

In a word, *Angels* drove us out of *Paradise*, and now they come to let us in again. Then they placed a *Sword* to keep us out, now they bring the word to let us in. None now you see more fit for this business than an *Angel*, than the *Angel Gabriel* too, whether we respect the persons, either from whom, or to whom the message comes, or the message or the time, or the way and order of it. So we have done with him, come we now to her, a greater than He, if we may speak with *Epiphanius*, and some others.

Yet I shall not give her other Titles than the Scripture gives her, I am afraid to give her such as many do. A *Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David she was, and her name was Mary*, in the verse before the Text. (1.) Of royal descent and lineage. (2.) Espoused to an Husband of the same Kingly house. (3.) Of a name very answerable to her greatness. Of *David's* Seed, for so her Son the *Messiah* was to be. A *Virgin*, for of such a one he was to come: *Semen mulieris*, not *maris*, from the beginning the womans seed, and not the mans, so necessarily a *Virgin* then, and so plainly foretold to be by *Isaiah*, Isa. vii. 14. A *Virgin shall conceive and bear him*; yea, a *Virgin espous'd*; (1.) To conceal the mystery of his *Incarnation* from the *Devil*; (2.) To take away all occasion of obloquy from devilish men; (3.) That the birth of our Saviour might be with all possible honour; and (4.) That his *Genealogy* might so be reckoned as all others regularly by the man, as you see them both by *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke*.

Of a high and illustrious name besides; *Maria* is *Maris stella*, says *St. Bede*. The star of the Sea, a fit name for the mother of the bright morning star, that rises out of the vast sea of God's infinite and endless love. *Maria* (2.) the *Lyriack* interprets *Domina*, a Lady, a name yet retain'd, and given to her by all *Christians*, our Lady, or the Lady mother of our Lord. *Marie* (3.) rendred by *Petrus Damiani de monte & altitudine Dei*, highly exalted, as you would say, like the Mountain of God, in which he would vouchsafe to dwell, after a more miraculous manner than in very *Sion* his own holy Mount. (4.) *St. Ambrose* interprets it, *Deus ex genere meo*, God of my kin, as if by her very name she was designed to have God born of her, to be *Deipara*; as the Church against all *Hereticks* has ever stil'd her the Mother of God: you may well now fully conceive no Embassador so fit to come to such an one as her but some great *Angel* at the least.

And his coming to her comes next to be considered, And the *Angel came in unto her*. Where we are taught both how he came, and where he found her. By his coming, or being said to come, we are given to understand, that it was in a bodily and humane shape; So *Angels* often used to come in the likeness of men, and at this time it was of all ways the most convenient that the *Angels* should come like men, seeing their Lord was now to come so: and one of them to come before him with the news. When he himself would vouchsafe to wear the livery of our flesh, 'tis most convenient his servants sure that wait upon him, whom he sends upon his errands, should appear at least in the same Livery. Nor could his Message easily be delivered in more sweetness, nor the Blessed Maid entertain it with less terror or diffidence any other way.

For though it could not but trouble her, as we see it did in the follow-

ing verſe, to ſee a man at that time in her Cloſet, ere ſhe was aware, yet his coming in ſo inſenſibly when the doors were ſhut upon her, beſides perhaps the brightneſs of his countenance and raiment could not but tell her it was an *Angel*, and ſo abate her fear a little.

Yet obſerve here a difference between the *Angels* coming now, and heretofore; we never read of an *Angels* appearing but abroad, or in the Temple, till now. Now they begin to grow more familiar with us, come in into our Cloſets now Chriſt is coming; the Kingdom of Heaven 'tis a ſign is come nigh unto us. And 'tis a good *Item* to us to keep much in our Cloſets ſeeing *Angels* are now to be met with there.

And (2.) 'tis an *Item* too for *Virgins* to keep within; *Dinah* went out and met with you know whom, came home ill-favouredly. The bleſſed *Virgin* keeps in, and meets with an holy *Angel*, and the title of *highly favoured*, and *bleſſed* for it. The ſtragling, gadding huſwife meets no *Angel* to ſalute her, whoſoever does; if we look for *Angels* company, and ſalutations we muſt be much within. A Garden enſealed is my Siſter, my Spouſe, a Spring ſhut up, a Fountain ſealed, ſays Chriſt, *Cant. iv. 12.* The Spouſe of Chriſt, the Soul he loves and vouchſafes his company, much private, oft within. Within, and at her Prayers and Meditation too. So was the *bleſſed Virgin*, ſay the Fathers here, bleſſedly employed, watching at her devotions; no way ſo ſure to get an *Angels* company, or hear good news from heaven, to obtain a favour or a bleſſing thence, as this, as prayer, and watching in our Cloſets.

This we piously believe of the *bleſſed Virgin*, but we are ſure ſhe was within, a true daughter of *Sarah* in it; who it ſeems kept commonly within doors in her Tent, *Gen. xviii. 10.* *whoſe daughters you are*, ſays *St. Peter*, *1 Pet. 3. 6.* *as long as you do well*; muſt be too in this, as well as other things, if you would do well.

For laſtly, to ſhevv the truth of the *Angels* vvords, that ſhe vvvas full of grace, the Scripture tells us, by the *Angels* coming into her, that ſhe vvvas vvithin, vvhere, *qui habeat abundantiam gratie*, ſays *Hugo*, *they that are full of grace*, keep in as much as they can, fearing the corrupt diſcourſes and converſations of the World. None ſo ſcrupulous of appearing abroad, none more fear idle, looſe, or vain diſcourſes (vvwhich cannot be avoided by ſuch vvho go often abroad) than they that are fulleſt of grace and goodneſs. Nor do they care for the ſalutation, favours, and complements of men, vvho are highly favoured of the *Lord*. No matter at all vvith them to be neglected by men, vvho deſire only to be ſaluted by an *Angel*, as vvvas the *Virgin* here, vvwhich falls next to be conſidered. The *Angels* Salutation.

Two Points vve told you there vvvere to be handled in it. The form of it, and the titles in it: The form in vvwhich it runs, the Titles vvith vvwhich it's given.

The form is in three expreſſions, *Hail, the Lord is with thee, Thou art, or be thou bleſſed*. Three ſeveral ſalutations, as it vvvere, and that (1.) for the greater reverence and honour to her, ſo Kings and Queens are commonly ſaluted vvith three adorations. (2.) To ſhevv from vvhom he came, from *Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt*, from all three perſons in the *Trinity*. That (3.) ſhe vvvas ſo intent and buſie at her devotions, that ſhe minded not perhaps his firſt and ſecond Salutation, he vvvas fain to add a third; To ſhevv laſtly the triple bleſſing that he came vvith, Peace, and Grace, and Bleſſedneſs; that Heaven vvvas novv at peace vvith us, Grace vvvas thence coming dovvn apace, Heaven doors ſet open, and the

very blessedness of Heaven clearly now propounded and proffered to us.

The first *salutation* is an *Ave*, a salutation never heard from *Angels* mouth before. And it speaks joy, and peace, and health, and salvation, both to her, and us by her. The Greek word is χαῖρε, *Rejoyce*, rejoyce indeed, at such a Child as now is to be born of thee, *O Virgin Daughter. Behold I bring you tidings of great joy, of a Child, all our joy by him, which is Christ the Lord*

2. The *Hebrew* word speaks, Peace be to thee. A wish for peace, the first news of Heaven reconciled; the way to reconciliation being now in agitation, and to be by her. Peace from the Prince of Peace, from the author of our peace, now coming, as joyful a salutation as we can wish, all our peace from this *Conception*, all begun with this message, and the *Angel* the *Herauld* of it.

3. It intimates health as well as peace, we were all sick till this day came, the best with the *Spouse*, sick of love, *Cant. v. 8.* the worst sick of somewhat else; none well till this news came, till the next morning after this great *Conception*, rose with healing in his wings. Now all hail, and whole, and well again.

4. It signifies a wish of salvation too. *Ave*, says one piously, though not learnedly, *a va*, all woe now away, temporal and eternal. *Eva* spell'd backwards, all *Eves* ill spun web unravel'd, undone, rould backward by the *Conception* of this *blessed Virgin* here foretold, temporal and eternal woes taken all away, nothing but joy and salvation to us if we will hear it with the *Blessed Virgin*, and accept it.

The second salutation is, *The Lord is with thee*, and it may be either an appreciation, or wishing that he would be, or an *Annunciation*, or affirmation, a declaring and affirming that he is, or a prediction or foretelling that he will be with her.

It was an appreciation when *Boaz* gave it to the Reapers, *Ruth ii. 4.* that God would be with them.

It was an appreciation and an affirmation both, when the *Angel* gave it to *Gideon*, *Judg. vi. 12.* *The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.*

It is affirmation, appreciation, and prediction, all three here, to our *Blessed Lady*, a wish that the *Lord* would, an assurance that he is, a prediction that he will be yet more signally, and more particularly with her by and by.

'Tis somewhat to be saluted by an *Angel*, and 'tis not common; we hear often of their coming with a message, seldom with a salutation: 'tis sign of more than ordinary acquaintance and familiarity with God, and of his respect particular unto us, when he sends his *Angels*, not only upon errands, but *how-do-yous* to us.

With such a salutation too, as *the Lord is with thee*. The hand of the *Lord* was with him, 'tis said of *St. John Baptist*, and that was well, his hand and not himself; and yet the greatest of them that was born of women was not greater than he, *St. Matth. xi. 11.* But here 'tis he himself with the greatest among women. It is a great favour to have his hand, but it is an high one to have himself with us.

Yet the *Angel* says to *Gideon*, *Judg. vi. 12.* *The Lord be with thee*, κῑεῖσθαι μετὰ σοῦ, but 'tis here ἡ κῑεῖσθαι μετὰ σοῦ, an *Article*, an *Emphasis* put upon it: he is not with her, as he is with any else, *Tecum in mente, tecum in ventre*, as the *Fathers* gloss it, *Tecum in spiritu, tecum in carne*, with her he was, or would be presently, as well in her body, as in her soul, personally, essentially, nay bodily with her, and take a body from her, a way of being

with any never heard before or since, a being with her beyond any expression or conception whatsoever.

And the *Lord* thus being with her, all good must needs be with her, all the gracious ways of his being with us are comprehended in it, so the salutation no way to be exceeded: And well may he chuse to be with her, even make haste and prevent the *Angel*, as St. *Bernard* speaks, to be with her. He is with the pure in heart, with the humble spirit, and piously retired soul, and she is all. And though by the *Angels* words, *ver.* 31. we cannot conceive that the *Lord* was yet conceived in her, he speaking in the future, yet as sure it was, even whilst the *Angel* was in his salutation, as if he were already incarnate in her flesh: upon this may well follow the third salutation, *Blessed art thou*, or be thou blessed. Yet,

I shall not here say much of this, I reserve it to be handled amongst the titles, onely tell you it may as well pass for a salutation as the other. We still sometimes use it in our salutations, use to say *God bless you*, when we salute sometimes; so the mowers to *Boaz*, return his salutation of, *the Lord be with you*, with *The Lord bless thee*, *Ruth.* ii. 4. And *Gen.* xlvii. 7. we read that *Jacob* blessed *Pharaoh* when he came before him, that is, saluted him in a form of blessing.

All the famous salutations, now you see, of all former and latter times are here rallied up in this, *Daniel's* *Live for ever*, for life, and health, and safety, the *Angels* to *Gideon*, *The Lord is with thee*, *Boaz* his to *Ruth*, *Blessed be thou*, of *the Lord my daughter*, *Ruth.* iii. 10. *Tobit's* to the *Angel*, *Gaudium tibi*, *Tob.* v. 11. *Joy be unto thee*, *Christ's* to his Disciples, *Peace be unto you*: The *Apostles* grace, and peace, and salvation to their Churches, all in this of the *Angel* to the *Virgin*, now in treaty about *Christ's Incarnation*. To shew us (1.) all these are in *Christ*, all now coming to us, by his coming to us, to be found altogether no where but in him, joy, and peace, and health, and salvation, and blessedness first rising on us by this days business, his *Incarnation*. To teach us (2.) good forms of salutation, blessing, and not cursing, though there are some so peevish, to say no worse, to tell us they had as lieve we should say the *Devil take them*, as *God bless them*, or *God be with them*. It seems they had rather imitate the bad *Angel* than the good, I hope we had not: Good words, if it be no more, are fittest sure for Christian mouths, but yet good wishes too; for he that forbids to say to some, *God speed you*, 2 *John* x. intimates we should say so to others: And though the *Disciples* are bid to salute no man by the way, *St. Luke* x. 4. that is, when it will retard or hinder their holy business, they are yet bid, when they come into a house, say, *Peace be to it*, *ver.* 5. And if the *Angel* do it, and *Christ* bid it, and do it too, as he does, *St. Luke* xxiv. 35. I hope we may and will do too. Nay, and give good titles too upon the same account, the *Angel* does so to the blessed *Virgin*, and we hasten to them. *Thou that art highly favoured, blessed, blessed among women.*

Thou that art highly favoured; but why, thou, without a name? why not *Mary* here as well as after, *ver.* 30. Why? there he used her name, so to dispel her fear as it were, by a kind of friendly familiarity; here he forbears it in his reverence to her. We use not to salute great persons by their Names, but by their Titles; and the Mother of God is above the greatest we here meet with upon the earth. We must not be too familiar with those whom God so highly favours, that's our lesson hence. We are not to speak of the *Blessed Virgin*, the *Apostles*, and *Saints*, as if we were speaking to our Servants, *Paul*, *Peter*, *Mary*, or the like:

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'Tis a new fashion of Religion, neither taken from *Saints*, nor *Angels*, nor any of *Heaven*, or *heavenly spirits*, to unfaint the *Saints*, to deny them their proper titles, to level them with the meanest of our Servants: We might learn better manners from the *Angel* here, manners, I say if it were nothing else, for we dare not speak so to any here that are above us, and we think much to be Thou'd without our titles, by that new generation of possessed men, who yet with more reason may call the best man thou, then we the *Apostles*, *John* or *Thomas*.

But to descend to a particular survey of these Titles here, *Thou that art highly favoured*, so our new Translation renders it, *Full of grace*, so our old one hath it from the *Latin*, *Gratia plena*, and both right; for *καταλειπόμεν* will carry both. Grace is favour, God's Grace is divine favour, high in grace, high in his favour, full of his grace, full of his favour, all comes to one.

Now there is *Gratia Creata*, and *Increata*, *Created grace*, and *uncreated grace*. Created grace is either sanctifying, or edifying; the gifts of the Holy Spirit that sanctifie and make us holy; or the gifts that make us serviceable to make others so. The first to serve God in our selves, as Faith, Hope, Charity, and other graces: The second to serve him in the Church, such as the gift of Tongues, of Prophecie, of Healing, and the like: of each kind she had her fulness according to her measure, and the designation that God appointed her.

For sanctifying Graces, none fuller, *Solo Deo excepto*, *God only excepted*, saith *Epiphanius*. And 'tis fit enough to believe that she vvho vvvas so highly honoured to have her Womb filled vvith the body of the Lord, had her soul as fully fill'd by the *Holy Ghost*.

For edifying Graces, as they came not all into her measure, she vvvas not to preach, to administer, to govern, to play the *Apostle*; and therefore no necessity she should be full of all those gifts, being those are not distributed all to any, but *unicuique secundum mensuram*, to every one according to his measure, and employment, and not at all times neither; so neither is she said to be less ful for vvwanting them. There is one fulness of the Fountain, another of the Brook, another of a Vessel; one fulness, of the Sea, another of the River, another of the Pond, and yet all may be full. *Christ* himself is said to be full of the *Holy Ghost*, and *St. Stephen* is said to be full, and others said to be full; yet *Christ* as the Sea or Fountain, they as the Rivulets or Rivers, and yet all as they can hold. 'Tis so in Earth, 'tis so in Heaven: And vvith such a fulness as the Brooks, or Rivers, is our Virgin full, and with no other. Where any edifying Grace vvvas necessary for her, she had it, as well as others; more perhaps than others: Where it vvvas not necessary, it vvvas no vvay to the impairing of her fulness, though she had it not; as the banks of the Rivers rose, or the Channel was enlarged, so were those graces: but *inter mulieres*, among women at the end, makes me incline to think the fulness of *Apostolick* endowments do not any way belong to her; women not being suffered in the times of the *Apostles*, but to teach their children or servants at home: never thought so full of the Spirit as to be sent to blow it all abroad.

And indeed it is not said here, full of the Spirit, but *full of Grace*, and that is commonly understood of sanctifying Grace, of which it is very convenient that we believe none fuller than she: and the original *καταλειπόμεν* will not inforce it much higher in the business of created grace.

But in respect of the increated Grace, that is, of *Christ*, with whom
she

she was now so highly favoured as to be with Child, none ever so filled with Grace indeed. This was a grace of the highest nature, of which created nature was never capable; *καταειρωμένη* well rendred, highly, highly favoured; for 'tis most highly can be imagined: and this is her first title, *O thou that art highly favoured*; high in Gods grace and favour, so high as to be made his Mother, then sure made a fit receptacle for so great, so holy a guest, by the fulness of all grace and goodness.

From this follows the second Title, *Blessed*, blessed of God, blessed of men: blessed in the City, and blessed in the Field; Cities and Countreys call her blessed. Blessed in the fruit of her body, in her blessed Child *Jesus*. Blessed in the fruit of her Ground, her Cattel, her Kine, and her Sheep, in the inferiour faculties of her soul, and body; all fruitful to Christ. Blessed her Basket, and her Store, her Womb, and her Breasts; the Womb that bare him, and the Paps that gave him suck. Blessed in her going out, and in her coming in; the Lord still being with her. The good treasure of Heaven still open to her, shewing down upon her, and the Earth fill'd with the blessings which she brought into the world, when she brought forth the Son of God. Blessed she indeed that was the Conduit of so great blessings; though blessed most in the bearing him in her soul, much more than bearing him in her body. So Christ intimates to the woman that began to bless the Womb, that is, the Mother that bear him, *St. Luke xi. 27.* yea rather, says he, they *that bear the word of God and keep it*: As if he had said, she is more blessed in bearing the word in her soul, than in her body. But blessed she is; *Elizabeth* by the Holy Spirit fell a blessing her when she came to see her: And she her self by the same Spirit tells us, all generations shall call her blessed, *ver. 28.* So we have sufficient example and authority to do it. And I hope we will not suffer the Scripture to speak false, but do it.

And (3.) do it to her above all women, *Benedicta tu in mulieribus*. That's her third Title. Most blessed, none so blessed; none ever had Child so blessed; none ever bore or brought forth Child as she.

Benedicta in mulieribus, *Blessed among women*; She indeed only blessed: all others subject to the curse of *in dolore paries*, of conceiving and bringing forth in sorrow. She wholly free from that, she a perpetual *Virgin* before, and in, and after Child-birth. Christ came into her Womb insensibly, came forth as it were insensibly too, without groan or sorrow to her. *Blessed (2.) among women*; they all henceforth saved by her Child-bearing: notwithstanding she, that is, woman shall be saved in child-bearing, *1 Tim. ii. 15.* *ἡ ἀνθρωπότης* by her child-bearing, says a learned *Commentator*, not their own, but hers, by the Child she bore; and they therefore shall call her blessed.

Blessed (3.) among women, that is, none more blessed then the best, the highest of them; none above the *Mother of God*, none sure so good as she which now brings me to consider the grounds of all this honour, all these Titles.

The first is Grace, *Gratiâ plena*, *χαρὶς* in *καταειρωμένη* that always the ground of Gods favour, and all our blessedness: So she tells us in her Hymn, *Respexit humilitatem*. It was the humility of his Hand-maid, that God in this high favour of the *Incarnation* of his Son respected in her. Humility the ground of all grace within us, all grace without us, of Gods grace to us, of his graces in us, the very grace that graces them all too. Humility makes them the most lovely, pride disgraces them all,
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be they never so many, though indeed they can be truly none, that are not founded in and adorned with humility.

The second ground of blessedness is in the *Text* too, *Dominus tecum*, the Lords being with her. From Christs being with her and with us, it is, that we are blessed. From his *Incarnation* begins the date of all our happiness. If God be not with us, all the world cannot make us happy, much less blessed: From this grace of his *Incarnation* first riseth all our glory: So that, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give the praise*, must she sing as well as we; and they do her wrong as well as God, that give his glory unto her; who will not give his glory to another, though to his Mother, because she is but his earthly Mother, a thing infinitely distant from the heavenly Father. Nor would that humble Hand-maid, if she should understand the vain, and fond, and almost idolatrous titles and honours that are given her some where upon earth, be pleased with them; she is highly favoured enough, that her Lord and Son is with her, and she with him: she would be no higher sharer. You may see it in the last particular, the bounds and limitations of her titles and blessedness.

For first, how full soever she be of Grace, 'tis yet but grace and favour, 'tis no more; Gods meer favour so exalted her, *respexit* only, his respect to her, his free looking on her, no merit or desert, *καταεισεμελεν*, he hath highly favoured her indeed, but he has done, done it in the *prater* before she could conceive or imagine it.

2. The salutation here, except the titles, given her by the *Angels*, is not much more than what he gave to *Gideon*, or what *Boaz* to his Harvesters: enough to make the *Papists* afraid one would think of those extravagant, at least, if not blasphemous titles they give her, of their closing their Books and Studies with *Laus Deo, & Virgini Maria*, joyning her in partnership with God; as if they were as much beholding to her as him. I am sure they learn'd not this from the *Angel*: he brings no divine, but humane titles and salutations to her. And he knew how to give titles, though not flattering ones, as *Elihu* speaks in *Job*.

3. All her honour and blessedness is from *Dominus tecum*, the Lords being with her. He is her Lord as well as ours. More indeed he is with her than with us, or with *Angels* either, *plus tecum, quam mecum* as some gloss it: but he is her Lord still for all that, and she is content so to acknowledge it, and leave us a penn'd *Hymn* in witness of it, to give him the sole honour of her magnifying and being magnified.

Lastly, Though it be *Benedicta*, 'tis but *inter mulieris*, among women, all this is; and they are but creatures: a creature-blessedness, a blessedness competent to the creature. All to shew us, that when we exceed this way of honour to her, or this way of blessing her, we are all out in our *Aves*, we know not what we say. And 'tis well for some, that their ignorance excuses them, that they understand not what they speak.

Give we her in Gods name, the honour due to her. God hath stil'd her blessed by the *Angel*, by *Elizabeth*; commanded all generations to call her so, and they hitherto have done it, and let us do it too: Indeed some of late have over-done it; yet let us not therefore under-do it, but do it as we hear the *Angel* and the first Christians did it; account of her, and speak of her as the most blessed among women, one highly favoured, most highly too. But all the while give *Dominus tecum*, all the glory, the whole glory of all to him; give her the honour and blessedness of the chief of *Saints*, him only the glory, that she is so, and that by her conceiving and
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bringing our Saviour into the world, we are made heirs, and shall one day be partakers of the blessedness she enjoys, when the Lord shall be with us too, and we need no *Angel* at all to tell us so.

Especially if we now here dispose our selves by chastity, humility, and devotion, as she did to receive him, and let him be new-born in us. The pure and Virgin Soul, the humble Spirit, the devout Affection will be also highly favoured; the *Lord* be with them and bless them above others. Blessed is the Virgin Soul, more blessed than others in *St. Paul's* opinion, *1 Cor. vii.* blessed the humble spirit above all. For God hath exalted the humble and meek, the humble Hand-maid better than the proudest Lady. Blessed the devout affection, that is always watching for her Lord in Prayer and Meditations; none so happy, so blessed as she: the Lord comes to none so soon as such.

Yet not to such at any time, more fully than in the *Blessed Sacrament*, to which we are now a going. There he is strangely with us, highly favours us, exceedingly blesses us: there we are all made blessed *Maries*, and become Mothers, Sisters, and Brothers of our Lord, whilst we hear his word, and conceive it in us, whilst we believe him who is the word, and receive him too into us. There *Angels* come to us on heavenly errands, and there our *Lord* indeed is with us; and we are blessed, and the *Angels* hovering all about to peep into those holy mysteries, think us so, call us so. There graces pour down in abundance on us, there grace is in its fullest plenty, there his highest favours are bestowed upon us, there we are fill'd with grace, unless we hinder it, and shall hereafter in the strength of it be exalted into glory; there to sit down with this *Blessed Virgin*, and all the *Saints* and *Angels*, and sing praise, and honour, and glory to the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* for ever and ever.

Thus by being full of grace, and full of those graces, we also become *Maries*, and the *Mothers of our Lord*; so he tells us himself, he that so does the will of my Father, he is my Mother. Let us then strive to be so, that the *Angels* may come with heavenly errands to us, our *Lord* himself come to us, and vouchsafe to be again born in us, and so bless us, fill us with grace, receive, and set us highly in his favour, and fill and exalt us hereafter with his glory, and with this *Blessed Virgin*, and all the *Saints* and *Angels*, we may sing praise, and honour, and glory to him, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, for ever and ever.

A
S E R M O N
O N
Palm Sunday.

St. M A T. xxi. 8.

And a very great multitude spread their Garments in the way, others cut down branches from the Trees, and strewed them in the way.



He branches in the *Text* point you out what day it is. St. John calls some of them at least *Palm branches*, St. Job. xii. 13. and the Church calls the day *Palm Sunday*. *Dominica Palmarum*, the day wherein our Blessed Lord, riding as Lord and Bishop of our souls his Visitation to *Hierusalem* upon an Ass, was met with a kind of solemn Procession by the people, a very great multitude of them, says our Evangelist, and had his way strewed with boughs, and bespread with cloths the best they had, as is usual in Princely Entertainments, and Triumphs, and Processions.

And 'tis both a day and business worth remembring, wherein we see the triumph of humility, whereby we are taught both humility and its reward, Christs mercy and mans rejoicing in it, Christs way of coming to us, and our way of going out to him to meet and entertain him. Things worthy consideration. All that was this day done were so, but they are many; and though they all concern us much, yet our own duty concerns us most, to know with what dispositions, which way, and how to meet and receive our Lord, come he never so meanly, never so slowly to us, upon Horse or Ass, by Mountain or Valley, gloriously or humbly to us, though come he how he will it will be humbly, the greatest imaginable condescension even to come unto us.

I shall stir out neither of the *Text* nor time to mind us of our duty in the way of receiving Christ, nor desire more matter to spend the hour than the words will give me. Only I must take both the Letter and Spirit of them. If we look to the History and Letter many remarkables we shall meet with: If to the Mystery and Spirit more and more punctually to

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our purposes. By both we shall be abundantly fitted against Christs coming to us; and for our due receiving him, the Sacramental within few days now at hand, not excepted; nay the Spirit of the words may be as fitly applied to that, to the Sacramental receiving him as any other, to teach us how to receive and meet him there as well as any where else.

Consider we the words then under both Notions, what they did as to the Letter, what we are taught to do by the Mystery and Spirit. In each these three Particulars:

I. The Persons that go out to meet Christ and entertain him; The *multitude, A very great multitude.*

II. The Ceremony and respect they meet him and entertain him with, *Some spread their Garments in the way, others cut down branches from the trees, and strewd them in the way.*

III. The Way and Place they meet and entertain him in, both the one and the other *in the way.*

There *they* met him, so *they* there entertained him so many hundred years ago, in the literal sense, in the same way and manner in the spiritual sense are we to entertain him every year and all our years and days to come. And by thus canvassing the *Text*, and taking both senses of it, we shall plainly see we have good reason to remember a *Palm Sunday*, the *Church* so to entitle it so to prepare us both to the *Passion* and the *Resurrection* by spreading still before us these branches of *Palms* and *Olives*, by insinuating this way unto us as the properest to entertain our *Saviour* in, to usher in the thoughts of both the *Passion* and *Resurrection* both his and ours, and fit us for them both.

I begin with the Persons of the *day*, and then I find the *multitude*, A *multitude* for their quality; a *very great multitude* for their number.

The *multitude* for their quality are the common people. And *Interdum vulgus rectum videt*, says the Poet, Sometimes, it seems, the Common People see what is right. No people of so low or mean understanding but may come to the knowledge of Christ, and understand the ways of Salvation. The *Rabbins* had a Proverb, that *Non requiescit Spiritus Domini super pauperem*, The Spirit of the Lord rests not upon the poor. And the *Pharisees* had taken up somewhat like it, when they give the people no better stile than *ἰμῶντα ἄνθρωποι*, than of *curst*, and such as *know not the Law*, St. *Joh. vii. 49*. Their blessing then comes by Christ it seems; so they may well honour him upon that score. *Πρώτοι ἐπαγγελλίζοντω* to the poor the Gospel is preacht, is one of the tokens he sends St. *John Baptist* to evidence himself the true *Messiah*, quite contrary to the *Pharisees* *Hic populus qui non novit*, this people that knoweth not the Law. The Gospel, the Law of Christ, the far better Law, is preacht, it seems, to the poor by him, and *spiritus* is now joyn'd with *pauperes*: The Spirit and poor together we find in his first Sermon and first beatitude, the poor in Spirit, St. *Mat. v. 3*. and a while after *Quam difficile, &c.* How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God? St. *Mark x. 23*. The condition altered, the poor advanc'd, the rich deprest, a good reason why the *multitude* should follow and respect him, and a great testimony of our *Saviours* mercy and humility so to honour mean things.

Yet (2.) that the *multitude* may not forget themselves, as they are too prone to do, to ride, you know whither, when they are set a horse back; they may remember, Christ would not commit himself unto them, St. *Joh. ii. 24*. He needed not their honour, he knew what they would do in a few days hence, cry as many *Crucifies* as they did to day *Hosannahs*; as fast to crucifie

crucifie him as now to blefs him. Indeed, they are eafie to be seduced and led away by any *wind of Doctrine*, new Teachers and Seducers. We have found it fo of late, Chrift, and his *Church*, and his *Religion* more difhonoured by the madnefs of the multitude than he was honoured here. They have ftript himfelf and his *Church* of all the Garments and Ornaments to cloath themfelves, inftead of ftripping themfelves, or fpredding their own Garments to honour him. Yet for all that, of fuch giddy pieces as thefe Chrift does not always refufe to be honoured, that we may know he does not deal with us after our fins, nor reject us for our weaknefses, much lefs condemn or damn us for them before we have committed them.

Nay, perhaps (3.) he accepts this honour from this *multitude*, that he might fhew us what all worldly honour is, how fickle, how inconstant, how vain it is, to puff up our felves with the breath of men, to feed our felves with their empty air. They that are now ready to lick the duft of fome great mans feet, and fpread not their Garments only, but their bodies for him to go over; not only to cut down boughs to ftrew his way, but to cut down every one that ftands any way in his way if he would have it, will within a few days, upon a little change, be as ready to trample upon that great one they fo much honour, and even cut his throat if he command any thing that pleafes not their humour, or croffes their private interefts and defigns. This very *multitude*, fo eager to day to exalt *Chrift* to the higheft in their loud *Hofannahs*, are as fair on *Friday* to exalt him to the *Crofs* by their louder cryings. He yet would fuffer them to give him honour that you might know all earthly honour what it is.

But (4.) he thus receives this honour from the *multitude*, that he might provoke great ones by their example. *St. Paul* tells us, that *Salvation was come unto the Gentiles to provoke the Jews to jealousie*, *Rom. xi. 11.* that they might in a holy strife and indignation endeavour to outgo them. 'Tis the like intended here, that we might think much that fimple men and women fhould outftrip us, the ignorant know more of Piety and Religion, do more at leaft, the poor and meaneft beftow more, much more on Chrift than we with all our wit, and wealth, and greatnefs, and honour.

And in this (5.) appears as well his power as providence and wifdom that he fhould out of fuch *stones* as thefe *raife up children unto Abraham*, that he fhould thus out of the mouths of babes and fucklings perfect his own praife, make the Child as eloquent as the Orator, the women as valiant in his fervice as the ftoutest men, the People underftand that which the learned *Doctors* would not fee. *Even fo O Father, for fo it pleafed thee to reveal thofe things to babes and fucklings, and hide them from the wife*, *St. Luke x. 21.* his only doing it was, neither their doing nor deferving, and it is marvelous in our eyes, an evidence of the freenefs of his power, that he can do what he pleafes, that he does what he lifts, no man can hinder him, none able to contradict him.

This (6.) fhews his Omnifcience and his truth, that nothing that he foretels, not a tittle of it fhall fall any time to the ground. He had foretold it by his *Prophet, Zech. ix. 9.* that the daughter of *Sion* fhould rejoyce, and the daughter of *Jerufalem* fhout for joy; and here we have it to a tittle. even their Sons and Daughters doing it, a very great multitude it is, and children and women in it; *Children in the Temple*, *ver. 15.* and the whole *City moved*, *ver. 10.* all Sexes then, that the Prophefie

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might

might be fulfilled to the last letter. So punctual is he of his word.

Yet to fulfil it fuller, 'tis a *very great multitude* in the *Text*, that we might know, that he that was here met by so great a company was the *Saviour* of all, as many as would come, that would spread their garments to receive him, make him any kind of entertainment, though burstrew boughs and rushes for him, that (2.) the World might know that he was going to his Passion, he went freely too; he could as well have used these multitudes to preserve himself, as thus strangely to do him honour; made them have bespread him with Arms and Weapons as well as arms and boughs of trees; strewd the way with their bodies in his defence, as well as their Garments in his honour; but he would suffer death, and therefore would not suffer that. To tell us (3.) that he should be served hereafter by great multitudes, and not by little handfuls of men and women; this was but a forerunner of the great multitudes of those that should hereafter believe on him.

Upon such grounds as these it is, that the Eternal Wisdom so uses this *great multitude* here to set forth his glory, makes them do that which themselves yet do not understand; to tell us he is a *Saviour* of the poor and needy, as well as of the rich and wealthy. That he does not (2.) utterly refuse mans service though he know it is not to last long, to teach us (3.) all the glory and honour we receive from men is but transitory and quickly vanishing; to provoke us (4.) by their doings, to a godly jealousy and contention to out-do them; to ascertain us (5.) of the exact performance of every *word* of his promises; To intimate, lastly, to us, that he is the *Saviour* of us, willingly comes to suffer that he may be so, that he may purchase a *Church*, great multitude, by it to himself. Thus you have some kind of glimmering light why this *great multitude* are employed in this way of honouring him by the way. And yet there is a mystery beyond it.

This *multitude* throngs together to inform us (1.) how *Christ* would be serv'd and honoured; with full Assemblies and Congregations. The places where he comes he loves to see crouded with devout Worshipers, to hear them encouraging and heightning one another with *O come let us worship and fall down and kneel before God our Maker*, and by outward reverence, gestures, and expressions, provoking one another to his service.

It instructs us (2.) that there is neither man nor woman, Master nor Servant, old man or child, poor or rich, to be out in giving glory to him, all sexes, ages, and conditions to flow together to do him service, the very children to lisp it out; they that have not a rag to cover shame may have a leaf to honour him; they that cannot, are not able to cut down a bough, may strew it yet; that cannot lift a branch, may hold a twig, do somewhat or other to his entertainment.

It preaches (3.) to us, that there is nothing readier to serve him than the poor in spirit; that the spirit which most does him honour, which is ever most ready to do it to him is the poor and humble Spirit, such as ranks it self lowest, thinks meanest of it self, none so mean in the meanest multitude. Heres the spirit of this *very great multitude*, the spiritual sense it speaks, a serving *Christ* with a poor and humble spirit, and bringing our selves, and all ours, our very children to speak or point out his praise, to do it too in the great Congregation, as the *Psalmist* speaks, to praise him among much people.

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And not only so, but with much ceremony too: so we read in the next particular, some *spread their garments in the way*, others *cut down branches from the trees*, and *strewed them in the way*.

II. These Ceremonies, neither of them, were strange among the *Jews* in the days of joy or triumph, or the inauguration of Kings and Princes. When *Jehu* was anointed King, 2 *Kings* ix. 12. we find every man hastening to take his own garment, and put it under him, spreading them as carpets for him to walk on, *ver.* 13. And in the Feast of *Tabernacles* it was commanded them to take *boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm-trees, and the boughs of thick trees and willows of the brook*, and so rejoice before the Lord, *Lev.* xxiii. 40. whence afterward it became usual in all Feasts of solemn Joy to do as much. So we read *Simon* entering the tower of *Jerusalem*, with *thanksgivings, and branches of Palm-trees*, *St. Matth.* xiii. 51. and when *Judas Maccabeus* had recovered and cleansed the Temple, they bare branches, and fair boughs, and palms also, rejoicing for it, 2 *Mac.* x. 7. So that the reason's ready why the multitude met *Jesus* in this fashion. They would long before have made him King; they believed he was the *Messiah*, the King of *Israel*; and therefore thus go out to meet him and receive him. They had heard his word, they had seen his miracles. *never man*, say the very *Pharisees* officers spake like him, with more authority and power he than all their *Jewish Doctors and Rabbi's* all together, never man did such things as he, and therefore no wonder if the people do some strange things too to express their opinions of him.

But the matter is not so much what they do, as what we learn by *Christ's* suffering them to do so. And by it we first gather, that *Christ* is no enemy to outward Ceremonies, and respects, to outward civilities and expressions.

That (2.) he dislikes not neither even the Ceremonies of solemn joys, and triumphs, of respects done to Kings, and Princes, and great Persons, or publick congratulations with them in the days of their joy, or of any publick joy, or particular gladness, as occasion shall present it.

That (3.) he rejects not even the old and antient Ceremonies, is as much content with such as any other; these were no other, and yet he sticks not to receive them, stumbles not at them.

Nay (4.) even in his Service, and for his own honour he accepts them, is not only content, but pleased also that they should do them to himself. It is the *Pharisees* only, and *Pharisaical* spirits, men of meer pretended Piety and Religion, whose devotion is only to be seen of men, whose whole business is to appear holier than others, not to be so, that find fault with the doing it, that would have them rebuk'd for it, *St. Luke* xix, 39. To whom *Christ* answers, that if they did not the stones would do more; they, even they would both cry out against them for their silence, and not doing it, and do what they could to express that joy of his coming to *Jerusalem*, of which they seem'd so insensible. The very trees would bow themselves, and every branch shake off its leaves, and spread the ways, if men should not spread their garments; break off themselves if they would not cut them down to strow them; the very stones of the Wall fall themselves into an even pavement to kiss the feet of their Lord and maker. Insensible and senseless stones are men the while that deny *Christ* eternal reverence, outward worship, reverent and ceremonious approaches to him, that make I know not what senseless arguments and excuses, idle scruples and pretences against old good significant Ceremonies in his service to his honour. The very stones confute them, and

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Christs telling us they would cry if men should not, signifies as well they would bow, and worship, and fall down, beautifie the ways and places where he comes if men should not, rear themselves into Temples and Altars, if men should be so irreligious not to raise and employ them to it. I now spare any other confutation.

We learn (5.) by *Christs* thus suffering them, and Gods secret moving them thus to spread the ways with boughs and garments, that he would be acknowledged to be that great He to whom all creatures owe themselves, to whom all are to be devoted, who is to be serv'd with all, even to a thred; the trees to pay their boughs, and men their garments, to strip themselves to the very skin, and consecrate even their garments to his honour, to lay them at his feet, to resign all to him, to be content that he, nay the very ass he rides on should trample on us if it be to his praise and glory, that that may be augmented by it.

Lastly, This spreading the way with *Garments*, and *Palm-branches* was the way of entertaining conquerors in their triumphs; and by his disposing it at this time to himself, he gave them to understand, that he was the conquerour over Death and Hell. In this only differing from other conquerours, that he triumphs before his conquest, none so but he, because none certain of the victory till it be perfected but he. This might go for a mystery among the rest, but it concern those persons peculiarly, and those times. The mystery of this point as it concerns us we are next to see, how these *garments* and *branches*, this *spreading* and *strowing* belong to us, how we are still so to spread our garments, and straw branches before Christ.

Now *Garments* (1.) pass in the accompt for riches, *Zech.* xiv. 14. and he that either bestows plentifully upon the poor, that clothes the naked, and feeds the hungry, and supplies the needy with any thing to cover, comfort, or refresh him, and spreads Gods holy house and table with offerings, gives or does any thing to beautifie his service, to add honour and solemnity to his Worship, spreads his *Garments* before Christ.

2. *Garments* are reckon'd among necessities, and he that not only out of his superfluity, but as the *Apostle* testifies of the *Corinthians*, 2 *Cor.* viii. 2. out of his poverty also abounds unto the riches of liberality that spares somewhat from his necessities, spreads even his inner garment at the feet of Christ.

But (3.) the *Garments* the *multitude* here spread were honorary, the outward vestments and more honourable, that we might know our honours also are to be laid aside; nay, laid down to be trod upon by any Ass for Christs sake, we to count nothing of our honour in comparison of his, tread all under foot, and reckon nothing so honourable as the reproach of Christ.

4. *Garments* are a shelter from the injury of wind and weather, of heat and cold. Yet if Christs business require it of us, we must not think much to lie open to storm and tempest, to be deprived of house and shelter, of robes and rags, nothing too much, nothing enough for Christ.

5. To spread our *Garments* under ones feet, was construed for a profession of subjection and obedience to him, for whom we spread, or to whom we send them, 2 *Kings* ix. 13. and 1 *Kings* x. 25. so to spread our garments in the way of *Jesus*, is to profess, and promise, and begin obedience to him, the chief spreading the way that he desires, the best way of entertaining him.

6. Our righteousness is called our *Garment*, *Rev.* iii. 4. and xvi. 15.

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This also we are to spread before him, that he may consecrate and hallow it ; till he has set his mark upon it, and seal'd it, it will not pass for current ; all our righteousness and obedience must have his stamp to confirm it, his robes to lengthen it, his righteousness to make it right.

Lastly, to spread our *garments* to receive him, may have a kind of reflection upon the preparation we are making for the *Blessed Sacrament*. We must open our bosoms, disrobe our selves, spread our garments, stretch out our hands, open our bosoms by confession, disrobe and dismantle our selves by renouncing all former vanities, spread all the good thoughts, and affections, and desires we can, stretch out our souls in all holy vows and resolutions, to receive and entertain him. Nay, all the former garments and spreadings may again be repeated and remembred here. We must spread our garments upon the backs of the poor, spread our selves before the Altar upon the pavement with all humility and devotion, neglect and trample upon all private respects and interests, lay aside all vain desires of honour and greatness, despoil our selves of all trust and confidence in our selves, or in the arm of flesh, faithfully protest and renew the vow of obedience and subjection, acknowledge our own no righteousness till he accepts it, thus spread our garments all we can to receive him with joy and honour.

But if it so fall out, that we either have not some of these kind of *garments*, those we have be not worth the spreading, we may yet cut down branches from the trees, and strew in the way, at least where our *garments* will not reach. Now several sorts of branches there were which we may conceive the multitude made use of. Two more particularly, *Palms* and *Olives*, yet from *Nehemiah* viii. 15. we may gather more, *Olive-branches*, and *Pine-branches*, and *Myrtle-branches*, and *Palm-branches*, and branches of thick trees, he reckons up and bids them fetch to make them Tents and Tabernacles, the like likely also here ; and in *Leviticus*, willows are added too : in brief, any such as were at hand, that grew by the way from Mount *Olivet* to *Jerusalem*. These to the letter, shall we see what spirit we can draw from them ?

Branches of Palm-trees by name *St. John* tells us they came out of *Jerusalem* to meet him with, *St. John* xii. 13. And *Palms* (1.) are the emblems of patience and perseverance, they cannot be deprest with any weight ; but the more you press them the more they rise ; and so may teach us the patience of the *Cross*, not to look sad for any hardship that shall befall us in the way to *Christ* : but the more we suffer for him, the more to bear up and lift up our heads that our redemption draweth nigh. *Palms* thence (2.) are signs of victory, so being here given as it were to *Christ*, they intimate to us both, to whom to give the glory of all the victory we get over our sins, and passions ; and so to labour our selves against them, that we may be thought worthy to overcome them.

2. *Branches of Olives* could not probably but be here too ; the meeting was upon Mount *Olivet*, a place full of *Olives* ; and *Olives* are the emblems of peace and meekness, of mercy and softness : nothing so smooth, so softning, so suppling as *Oyl*, to teach us what spirit we are of if we be *Christ*s : this the offering he is most pleased with, the disposition he most delights in ; his way is spread with *Olive-branches*, is a way of sweetness, his yoke an easie yoke, full of rest and peace to the wearied soul : the *Christians* way must be so too, a sweet and quiet temper in us through all our ways.

3. We may have leave to conjecture from that cited place of *Leviticus* and

and *Nehemiah*, there were other sorts besides. *Pine-branches*, or as some render the word, *branches of Balsam*, and *Cedar-trees*.

Now the *Pine* and *Cedar* are tall, streight, and upright trees, and may mind us of high heavenly thoughts, pure and upright intentions, streight and regular affections, to run forth to meet him with.

In particular, the *Pine* is a Tree, says *Pliny*, that is, never but bearing fruit: It has perpetually three years fruit upon it, and ripens month by month. What a glorious tree is this to present to *Christ*! a soul always bearing fruit, fruit after fruit, fruit upon fruit, adding to faith, verue; to verue, knowledge; to knowledge, temperance; to temperance, patience; to patience, godliness; to godliness, brotherly kindness; to brotherly kindness, charity, as *St. Peter* advises us, *2 Pet. i. 5, 6, 7.* bearing still one fruit upon earth, for the great years, the three great ages of our life, youth, man-hood, and old age. till we bring our years to an end.

The *Cedar* next is a sweet lasting wood, will not take worm, corrupt, or lose its scent; and the branches of it shadow out thus much to us, that in the actions we present to *Christ*, there be no worms, no by intentions, no corrupt affections, all sweet, and incorrupt, and a continued constancy, and continuance in them.

The *Balsame*, or *Balm-tree* (3.) is a Tree medicinal to heal and cure Wounds; and is there no Balm in *Gilead*, no Physician there, says the Prophet *Jeremiah*? If there be not, here there is; upon *Mount Olivet* there is here, upon *Mount Calvary* there is, in *Christ's* Death and Passion to which he here is going: let us then bring *Balm-branches* thence, and strew the way; acknowledge our Physician, in whom our health, he that heals the lame, the blind, the sick, and all.

4. *Nehemiah* mentions *Myrtle-branches*, as usual in such solemnities as these. It was a Tree, says *Pliny*, dedicated to love; and the boughs of it may teach us upon whom all our love is to be bestowed, all upon *Christ*, all upon *Christ*.

At the *Feast of Tabernacles*, from whence this spreading the ways were borrowed, we read of *Willows*, the *Willows of the Brook*; and they may denote unto us, that we are to sit down with the *Willows* a little by the waters, look upon our selves in the streams of repentant tears, and then bring our branches so watered to strow the way of *Christ*.

There is yet *lignum nemorosum*, the branches of thick trees behind, to tell us that we are to strew the ways not here and there with our piety and good works, but thick every where, as thick as may be, that so we may even cover the way, hide the earth, all appearance of earth, or earthly, sensual, worldly desires and thoughts, when we are coming to receive our Lord.

Thus I have brought you to the Trees, shewed you what to spread *Christ's* way with: you must now cut down the branches, and strew the way; take others in your hand and present him with. And with joy, and gladness, and thankful hearts both accept the infinite favour he does you to come to you, and rejoyce in it. 'Tis time now I say somewhat of the way he comes, the way you are to meet him in.

III. Between *Mount Olivet* and *Jerusalem* it was, from the Mount into the Temple. Upon the Mount he preacht, and in the Temple he taught, and there in his word you are to meet him, and that the word pass not away as the wind, and empty air, you are to come to it with prepared hearts, to open your ears, to spread your hearts to entertain it, to bring the boughs of *Olives*, peaceable and pliant dispositions, boughs of *Palms*,

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conquered passions; bows of *Cedar*, constant resolutions; boughs of *Myrtle*, loving affections to it: and from Mount *Olivet* to *Jerusalem* remember it is from the Mount of Peace to the City of Peace; that you may not forget to come in the unity of the *Churches* peace; without Schism, or Faction, or schismatical and factious intentions, if you look to meet *Christ* there.

2. In both *Olivet* and *Jerusalem* you see there is a mystery; the *branches* and *garments* cover mysteries all the way, are kind of Sacraments; and in the *Blessed Sacraments* it is we receive *Christ Jesus*. Throw we then our *garments* in the way, cast all our own from us, that we may have none but *Christ*; bring *Palms*, and *Pines*, and *Olives*, *Cedars*, and *Myrtles*, and *willows*; all thick and all green verdant pleasing graces, virtues, and affections to them, spread them all at the foot of the Altar; that's the *Ass* that *Christ* rides on; the holy elements they that carry him, they that convey him to us: There's our conquerour, let us bring *Palms*; there's our peace-maker, let us bring *Olive-branches*; there's the Lord our righteousness, let us bring the upright *Pine*; there's our sweet-smelling favour in the eyes of God our eternal redemption, let us bring *Cedar-boughs*; there's the great *Physician* of our souls, let us bring him *Balm*; there's our love, let's bring him *Myrtle*; there's the well-spring of our life, let's bring *willows*; there's the fulness of our good and happiness, let's bring him the *branches of thick trees*.

That we may do it better, remember this way is the way to the *Cross*, this *procession* to his passion. This the way, his *Cross* and Passion the meditation we are to receive him in. Let us readily strip our selves of all our *garments* for him, who is stript presently of all his for us. Let us cover him with *Palms*, and crown him with *Olives*; let us make it our business and delight to be always *strewing* his way before him, to be doing all our endeavours we can to entertain him. Let us leave no branch of virtue out, spread them as thick as possibly upon this earth of ours, cover our selves with them that we may be the way, our souls and bodies the way for him.

And now you see, I hope, how fit *Palm-Sunday* is to usher in the *Passion*, to precede the receiving *Christ*; the very *Trees* of the Wood have told you it: I shall do no more, spread the *boughs* no further. 'Tis you now must *strew* them, or I have but hitherto strewed in vain.

The work is not to be done singly by the Preacher, 'tis the *multitude* that is to do it too; 'tis to be done in publick, 'tis to be done in private, 'tis to be done by the *Apostles*, 'tis to be done by the people, 'tis to be done by men, women, and children, old and young, poor and rich, all to bear a part by the way if they hope to come to the happy end; every one either to spread his *garment*, or strew a *branch*, or bring a sprig; some one thing, some another, but all something to the honour of *Christ*; to do it with much solemnity and respect, outward and inward all of it, as to one that deserves all that we can do to strew our souls, to strew our bodies, to fill our hands, to spread all our powers and affections to entertain him; to strew our souls with *Palms*, and *Olives*, *Pines*, and *Cedars*, *Myrtles*, and *Willows*, patience and meekness, uprightness and constancy, love and repentance, and all holy virtues, as thick, as full, as fair as may be; think nothing too much, nothing enough to do or suffer in his service.

Then shall our *garments* truly cover us, and keep us warm; then shall our *trees* bring forth fruit, when *boughs* and *garments* are thus employed; then shall our ways be strewed with peace, every one sit under his own

vine, and drink the wine of it, then shall our *branches* cover the hills, and stretch out unto the River. He that is the *Branch* in the *Prophets* stile, shall so spread them for it, give us the *tree of life* for these liveless boughs, and for the spreading our *garments* over him, spread his garment over us, the *robe of his righteousness*, the garment of glory, where strewing our *garments* and *branches* with this *great multitude* in the *Text*, we shall with that *great multitude* in the *Revelation*, of all Nations, which no man can number, stand before the *Throne*, and before the *Lamb*, clothed with white garments, and palms in our hands, singing and saying, *Salvation unto our God*, which sitteth upon the *Throne*; and to the *Lamb*, *Blessing*, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

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S E R M O N
U P O N
Good Friday.

1 C O R. ii. 2.

For I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.



And this being Passion day, *I am determined not to preach any thing among you to day but Jesus Christ and him crucified.* I cannot preach any thing more reasonable, nor you hear any thing more comfortable, nor any of us know any thing more profitable. St. Paul himself thought nor he nor his *Corinthians* could, determined so here *ex Cathreda*. And the Holy Church has thought and determined so too; to send no other *Epistles*, to preach no other *Gospels* to us this week thorow than of *Jesus Christ and him crucified*: as if the sum of the *Gospel*, the *Gospel* it self, were nothing else; no other knowledge worth the knowing, at least at this time, these days to be thought of or intended.

Not but that we may lawfully have other knowledges besides, intend other knowledges too at other times, in their proper times; not but that we may know more of *Jesus Christ* himself than his being crucified; but that all the knowledges of him tend hither, *Jesus and Christ* his salvation and Office clearest seen here, best determined hence; that all other knowledges are to be directed hither, to *Jesus Christ*, are but petty and inconsiderable in respect, and only worth the knowing when *Christ* is in them, and we with *Christ* crucified in them, or affections mortified and humbled by them; that especially at this time nothing is so fit to take up our thoughts, to employ our meditations, nothing not of *Christ* himself, no act or story of him as his *crucifixion*.

And yet the *Text* affords us a plainer reason and account of this so determined knowledge from the two *Pronouns*, *I* and *You*. None so fit for this *I*, for an *Apostle*, a Preacher, a Divine, to be determined to, to determine from, to be determined by as *Christ and him crucified*; nothing so fit to fasten his resolutions against the crosses and thwartings he is like to meet with in the world, even among them he bestows and spends most upon, and would be bestowed and spent himself for, as this *Apostle* for these *Corin-*

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thians, 2 Cor. xii. 15. as the consideration of the *Cross of Christ*. And no knowledge fitter for this *You*, for the *Corinthians*, people now divided into Schisms and Factions, than to think of *Christ crucified*, rent and torn in pieces by them, thus crucified again by them through their Divisions, who was crucified to unite them, to bring all into one body, under one head, by *his body on the Cross*, into himself the head *Christ Jesus*.

For there were at the time of this *Epistle* among the *Corinthians*, as there are now among us, some that much boasted of their knowledge, as if they alone knew all was to be known, more than *St. Paul*, than a hundred *St. Pauls*; made themselves heads of Factions and Schisms upon it, and drew parties after them. In this indeed differing from the heads of ours, that they vaunted of their Humane Learning, ours have nothing but ignorance to boast of; they would have Faith reduced to Reason, these rul'd by fancy; yet in this agreeing both, in their ignorance of the *Cross of Christ*, or sure quite forgetting it, and making Schisms, and sowing Heresies in the *Church of Christ*, though perhaps we could find them some *Socinianiz'd* wits too, that would fain bring all to natural reason, and really deny the very effects of the *Cross of Christ*, his satisfaction and redemption, the very denying, in effect, *Christ crucified*, or any knowledge of it.

To beat down these great boasters, and all vain braggers, *St. Paul* resolves upon two Points in the *Text*, a seeming ignorance, and a real knowledge: A seeming ignorance to confound their seeming knowledge; a real knowledge to confound their real ignorance; not to *know*, and but to *know*; not to know, that is, not to seem to know any thing; yet to know, to know every thing that is worth the knowing, *Jesus Christ and him crucified*, the whole way of salvation: So to teach us besides, and all that should come after him, what to *determine*, and how to *determine* both of our ignorances and knowledges; what not to *know*, things that have no profit, but only breed strife and debate, Schisms and Divisions, not to *know* such things among them, to do others hurt by our knowledge. What to *know*, *Jesus Christ and him crucified*, that to be sure to know, and *nothing but him and it*, and in order unto it or him; thus to *determine* and be *determined* the only way to profit and benefit both our selves and others at any time with our knowing and not knowing; to know what, and how far to know, and not to know; what to determine of, and where to be determined.

Thus we have brought the *Text* to its own natural division, to hinder our unnatural ones; *St. Pauls* double determination: One, for Ignorance, the other, for Knowledge; one, *not to know*, the other, to *know*. A *determination* too in a double sense, as well as a double Object. A double *Determination* about not knowing, and a double one about knowing. A *determination* to both, and a determination of each.

I. A Determination not to know, to seem ignorant, *I am determined not to know*.

A Determination of this not knowing, or seeming ignorant, it is but seeming, only so determin'd or put on; 'tis but *among you*, 'tis but in comparison of the following knowledge, which is the only saving knowledge.

II. A Determination to know, not to be really ignorant, though, *not any thing but*, is something though not *that* those false Teachers vaunted of.

A Determination or determining of this knowledge (1.) to *Christ*,
(2.) *Christ*

(2.) *Christ Jesus*, (3.) *Christ Jesus crucified*; that, and nothing further, now further, *among them*, nothing else to determine himself, or them, or his, or their knowledges by at any time, nothing save that, nothing saving but that.

Thus the *Text* determines both our knowledge, and ignorance, and limits both, shall determine and limit our discourse. God grant we may all so be determined by it, that both our ignorance and knowledge may hence learn their bounds and limits, and all end at last in *Jesus Christ and him crucified*.

I begin with St. Paul's determination, *not to know any thing among the Corinthians*; where we have (1.) the things he is determined not to know; (2.) the not knowing them; (3.) the determination so to do; (4.) the determining how far, and among whom, how, and where to be ignorant, and not know them.

And first, many things there are *not to be known*, of which 'tis good to be ignorant. Some things that are not worth the knowing, light and trivial things, which only rob us of those pretious minutes which a Christian should spend upon nobler thoughts.

Some things we are the worse for knowing, which only infect the soul, and instead of knowledge bring blindness and ignorance upon it, Adam and Eves unhappy knowledge, when we will needs be knowing more than God will have us, curious and vain Arts and Sciences, of which 'tis far better, with those in the *Acts*, to burn the books than read them.

Some things we can scarce do worse than know them, whose very knowledge is a guilt whereby we are perfected in wickedness, grow cunning in contriving, subtle in conveying, experienced in managing sin or mischief.

Some things again there are which it is best *not to know*, sins from which the safest fence is ignorance, whose knowledge would but teach us to do them, or leave in us a desire and itching after them, *nitimur in vetitum*; sins which else perhaps we had never thought of or attempted, the not knowing of which had kept us safe, because we cannot desire things we know not.

Some things there are again, which though good and commendable, yet of which we may say, and say truly, 'tis very pleasant and useful too *not to know* in time and place; and such is this *any thing* of the *Apostles*; Humane Learning and Sciences, Natural Reason and Artificial Eloquence, Tongues and Languages, Disputes and Questions, whereof sometimes a real ignorance, sometimes a seeming one will do more good than all of them together.

For diversity there is in the *not knowing* as well as in the things *not to be known*; many ways of *not knowing*. For *not to know*, is (1.) really to be ignorant; which in good matters, if it be not voluntary or affected, but either by reason of a natural dulness or incapacity, or for want of education which we could not have, or because we had not the means or time to come to the knowledge of it; or if we were not bound *to know* it, is no sin, may not only excuse from punishment, but from fault. Thus the poor simple man, that knows not a letter, nor understands half what others do, not the tenth part that others do, may know enough of *Christ crucified* to bring him into heaven, when many that are more learned shall stand without. But this ignorance, for the most part of it, must not be *determined* by us; we must not, the meanest of us, resolve and
determine

determine with our selves to be ignorant, or remain so in any spiritual or heavenly business, but *to know* as far as our condition requires, or will give us leave. Yet in meer humane knowledges even a resolved ignorance may do well, when your knowing would take up more time than it is worth, when it would rob us of better, or hinder us in the more necessary improvements of our souls, when there is just fear it will but make us insolent or impertinent; better far *not to know* a Letter, not to speak a Tongue, but what the Nurse and Mother taught us, than be the nimblest *Orator*, or skilfullest *Linguist*, or rarest *Philosopher*, if nothing be like to come of it but the disturbance of the *Church*, the seducing others, and vain glory in our selves. In this case we may, with *St. Paul*, even *determine* to be ignorant, more ignorant still, especially in unprofitable, curious, or impious knowledge, or ways of knowing.

However, even in the best and most necessary of these it may be requisite *not to know* in a second sense; that is, not to seem to know them, to bear our selves sometimes as if we did not. There are some we may have to deal with that are suspicious of being deceived by too much reason and *Philosophy*, with whom 'tis the only way to work, to renounce, as it were, all Art, and *Logick*, and discourse, as if we were wholly ignorant in them, that we may so by *St. Pauls* own way, of becoming all things to all men, to the ignorant as ignorant, of every thing but salvation, by plainness and condescension to their humour win them to the truth. And indeed, where ever *Eloquence*, *Language*, *Philosophy*, or natural reason are like more to lose than gain a soul, more to vaunt themselves than preach *Christ*; *not to know*, that is, to seem *not to know* them, or deal by them, or build upon them, or make shew of them, but conceal them is the best.

Not to know them in a third sense is not to teach them, not to teach them when we should be teaching *Christ*, or teach them instead of *Christ*, Natural Reason for Divine Faith, Moral *Philosophy* for the only Divinity.

Not to know them, fourthly, to profess and make our whole business of them, to make knowledge our whole profession, as if Religion consisted knowing only, and they the best Christians that knew most. Alas, *Nos Doctrinis nostris trudemur in infernum* is too true: *Many a learned man is thrust at last into hell with all his knowledge*. We may speak with the tongues of *Angels*, and have all knowledge, all faith too, even to a miracle, and to do miracles, and yet for all that be but sounding brasse and tinckling Cymbals, meer noise and vapour, not so good as the *Prophets reprobate Silver*, but meer Brasse and Copper, that will not pass with heaven for currant money, nor be received into the Treasuries of God, better it is *not to know* at all, than to know only and no more, to know and not do, we shall only get the more stripes by the bargain; and however we seem to know God, not to be known of him, or acknowledged by him, but sent away by *Christ* with an *I know you not*.

The things then not to be known, and the not knowing being things of so difficult or doubtful nature, best it is now that we determine somewhat of them, that we may know both the things, and knowledge, or rather not knowledge that is fittest for us.

The *anything* the Apostle means, expressly is set down in the former verse under the terms of *excellency of speech or wisdom*; and that wisdom, *Chap. i. 20.* to be the wisdom of the world; of the wise and prudent, *Moral Philosophy*; of the Scribe, Law, and History, and *Philology*; of the disputer of this world,
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natural *Philosophy*, *Mathematicks*, *Astronomy*, *Astrology*: all which St. Paul seems determined not to know.

'Tis *enigma*, he has so judg'd it, so judg'd and past sentence upon all those knowledges, as to give a *μν η* to give a *negative* to them all. In things of moment 'tis good to be determined and resolved. 'Tis for want of this judgment and determination that we lose our selves so oft e're we are aware, and not only consume our days in knowledges that do not profit, in searching out endless *Genealogies*, and disputations to no benefit of the hearers without the least edification. Settle we and fix our selves upon this point in all our knowings, and not knowings, to do all to edification, that whether we know any thing or not, whether we know every thing or nothing, it be all to the glory of God; and then even our ignorance will save us as well as our knowledge: only with this *item*, that it be a determining by *enigma* with the *Apostle* here, a determination with judgment, to discern and judge what things are fit not to be known, what to be known, what knowledge, and time, and pains to bestow upon them; what we are to be wholly ignorant in, what in part, what really not to know, what to seem only not knowing in, what to conceal, and what to teach, what to make our profession of, and what to know only by the by; how far, and where, and when to know them.

And this is the very determining our determination I spake of for a fourth consideration. I shall set no other bounds either to our knowledge, or object, or our determining our selves to it, or in it, than what we have within the bounds of the *Text*, because my determination is to hasten to the knowledge of *Jesus Christ and him Crucified*.

To determine then this determination of St. Paul's, *not to know any thing*, take we the words as they lie, and consider who it is that has thus determined. 1, it is, that St. Paul himself it is, an *Apostle*, and a great knowing one too. Yet *I have determined* not to know. *Sciences* there are that are below an *Apostle*, that become not him whatever they do others. The *Apostles* were to act all by the power of the Spirit, were not to study words and humane arguments, though we sometimes find them disputing too, *Acts* xix. 8. and quoting *Poets* and humane Authors, *Acts* xvii. 28. were not to pretend to such worldly wisdom, that the glory might be wholly Gods, and the whole world convinc'd, that as the Christian Faith was not stablished by mortal strength, nor settled by worldly power, so it was not perswaded by humane wit or interests, and was therefore truly divine and heavenly.

But (2.) even the successors of the *Apostles*, the Ministers of the *Gospel*, (though they have now only this ordinary way of enabling them to their office) are yet so to use their knowledge, as if they us'd them not, their chief work being *Christs*, and these only as ways to it, remembering their great business to be *to know Christ Crucified*, and to teach him, and not to know any thing but in order to it, at least not to profess any thing above or equal with it, that may swallow up the time, which ought to be spent in divine employments. Thus this not knowing is first determined by the person: Persons wholly interested in the business of Heaven, not to turn their studies into a business of the world, persons design'd to an extraordinary office, not to deal in it by extraordinary means, but guide all according to that rule, and way, and work that God has set them.

But the not knowing the secular Sciences, is not only limited to spiritual persons; there are limits within which all must keep as well their ignorance as knowledge. When at any time they will determine not
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to know it must be (1.) by *ἐκείνα*, by judgment and discretion, not promiscuously: such things as sound judgment propounds unnecessary, dangerous or unfruitful.

It must be (2.) by a *non judicavi quicquam*, whatsoever knowledge we have of humane Sciences, we must judge and reckon it as nothing, determine it to be no other than dross and dung, than building with hay and stubble in respect of the knowledge of *Jesus Christ*, not any thing to that.

It must be (3.) too without putting any estimate upon our selves for any such knowledge; we must still think we know nothing whilst we know no more. *Moses* a man, as *St. Stephen* styles him, *Acts* vii. 22. *mighty in words, and deeds, and learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*; yet when God would send him of his errand, considering that, tells God he was not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since he had spoken to his servant, but slow of speech, and slow of tongue. And *Isaiah* that *Seraphick Prophet* cries out, he is a *man of unclean lips*, *Isa.* vi. 5. so little valued they all their knowledge, when they had but a glimpse of that great knowledge God was now imparting to them. How much soever we think, we know before, when we once come to the knowledge of *Christ*, or but our thoughts to come to know a taste of *the riches of the fulness of the knowledge of Christ*, we then know we know nothing, count our selves dolts and ideots, meer fools and blocks for squandering away so much time, and cost, and pains, upon those empty notions whereby we are not an inch the nearer Heaven, and it may be the further from God, after all our labour. Then only we begin truly to know, when we can pass this sentence upon our selves, that we know not any thing; when we are so humble that we think so, at least think not any thing of our selves for all we know.

4. We must *determine not to know any thing* at all of humane Sciences or natural reasonings, rather than to determine our selves by it, renounce it rather, all knowing, and turn all to believing; not fix our faith upon natural principles, or believe no further than we can know; rather than so, we had far better know nothing, set it up for a resolution however in the matters of faith not to know, that is, not to go about to determine them by reason: for the natural man he understands them not, *ver.* 14. they are foolishness unto him, a foolish thing to him to talk of a God Incarnate, of a Crucified Saviour, of a Religion whose glory is the Cross, and reward he knows not where nor when.

Or (5.) he is only *not determined to know any thing*; so the *negative* is truly joyn'd, not to his knowledge, but to his determination, *not determined*: if he know it he counts it but by the by, his main business is something else, humane knowledge is but by the way and *obiter*, he intends them not for his doctrine, nor yet to prove or stablish his doctrine upon them, as upon foundations, nor preach moral and natural *Philosophy* for Divinity; but to advance both the one and the other: all *Philology*, *Language* and *History* to the Service of *Christ*, and the glory of his *Cross*, to use our *Rhetorick* to set forth his sufferings, the merit, and benefit, and glory of them: our natural *Philosophy* to find us out the God of Nature in all his works: moral *Philosophy* and *History* to dissuade Vice, and encourage Virtue, even by the light of nature, the knowledge of the Heavens and heavenly Spirits to declare his excellent and wondrous works, our *Criticisms* to sift out truth, and our *Languages* to express it: in a word, not so much to know any of them, as God through them; not them properly, but *Christ*
Jesus

Jesus by them. There is no fear of humane Sciences thus determined.

Yet there is one way more to determine our not knowing by, by the persons with whom we have to do. Our Doctrines, (for so we told you, and for the chief meaning here we tell you now again, to know here signifies to teach) our Doctrines are to be proportioned and fitted for the auditory: It was no meaner a mans practice than *St. Pauls*, to the weak to become as weak, to gain the weak; to the weak and simple not to speak mysteries and speculations; to them that were without Law, as without Law, plain honest dealing, not quirks and quilllets, to gain such; not to know any such thing among such as they. Yet sometimes upon the same ground to do quite contrary, to confound the wisdom of the world, by that which that counts foolishness; the strength of the world by that it reckons weakness; the honourable things of the world by things which that esteems base and ignominious. The *Corinthians* gloried in their learning and eloquence; *St. Paul*, to confute their vanity, undertakes to do more by plainness and rudeness of speech and ignorance, than they all of them can by all their wisdom and rhetorick: among them he will make no use of any thing but the contemptible knowledge of the *Cross of Christ*, and yet do more then all their *Philosophers* and *Orators*. Where Learning will serve but to ostentation, and the ear only tickled by it, or humane applause not edification, Schism not peace, the issue of it; among them *not to know any such thing* is best of all; for *let all things be done*, says the *Apostle*, *to edification*, 1 Cor. xiv. 26. and if that will be done best by plainness, to use plainness; if by learning, to use that; as the *you* are that are to be edified, so the *I*, the Minister to deal with them; if they be puffed up with humane knowledge to humble them to the *Abc* of the *Cross*, to exalt and preach up that above all knowledge whatsoever, if divided into Schisms by the several Sects of *Philosophy*, or the Masters of them, to unite all again into one, as so many pieces into one *Cross*, among them to cry up no knowledge but thence, or thither.

So then now to sanctifie all our secular knowledges and ignorances, thus we are to determine them, to know our times, and place, and persons for them, to keep measure and order in them, to profess none that are wicked, or only vain and curious, and to no profit, to submit our knowledge to faith, and our determination to the *Churches*, not to overvalue them, or our selves by them, but only make them hand-maids to guide us to the *Cross of Christ*, and there with *Mary Magdalen* and the good women stand weeping at it; *not to know any* of them otherwise, to resolve and determine nothing of *Christ* by them, and *not to know* them where they will know no submission and order. I come now to our knowledge, and 'tis indeed the only saving one; *Jesus Christ*, and him crucified; nothing save that, nothing to that.

For you may now take notice, that it is not an absolute determination not to know, a decree for ignorance, but a determination with a But, *not any thing save*, then save something, something to be known still. Some have been blam'd for making Ignorance the mother of Devotion, yet themselves that blam'd them have advanc'd it to be the mother of Religion now whilst they set up meer ignorants, I might say more, to be the *Apostles* of it: fit teachers I confess of their Religion, which so much abhors the *Cross of Christ*, as to cast it off their own shoulders upon other mens, and the name of *Jesus*, as to reckon it superstition to respect it.

But this great *Preacher* of the *Cross* as much as he seems determined not

to know, had yet *languages* more than all these *Corinthians* he writes to, tells them of it too, 1 Cor. xiv. 18. though he will not boast of it, disputes even in *Corinth*, in the *Synagogue of the Jews*, Acts xix. 8. and in the *Schools of the Gentiles*, ver. 9. quotes *Heathen Poets* too to the men of *Athens*, Acts xvii. 28. and to *Titus*, Tit. i. 12. that we may know that the preachers of the *Gospel* may read other Books besides the Bible, shall never read that to understand it if they do not. 'Tis only in some cases, and with some persons we are not to make profession of them, and meerly too upon private determination, as our own wisdom and prudence shall direct us; not that *God* or *Christ* has determined the least against it. *God* would have his people to seek his Law at the mouth of the *Priest*, *Malachy* ii. 7. and adds the reasons, because *his lips should keep knowledge*. And *Christ Jesus* though he made poor simple *Fishermen* his *Apostles* to divulge his *Gospel*, yet he would not have the blind lead the blind, for fear of falling both into the ditch, St. *Matth.* xv. 14. and therefore promises to give them wisdom, St. *Luke* xxi. 15. such wisdom as all their adversaries should not be able to gain-say, and sends down the *Holy Ghost*, with the gifts of tongues to sit upon them all; so little is there to be said for the ignorant and unlearned mans teaching from them, who before they went about that work were so highly furnished and endued. And though the *Apostle* here resolve the *Corinthians* to make no profession of those great knowledges; yet it is to shame them only from the great estimate and confidence they set upon them, and reduce them to humility, and into order, and to edifie them, that he chooses and prefers to speak among them *but five words in a known tongue*, before all languages to no purpose.

And indeed all tongues are too little, to speak of that the *Apostle* is here about, *Jesus Christ*, and him crucified; all knowledges not sufficient to make us know him, and teach him as we should. We had need have all tongues and knowledges, all words and eloquence to set it forth.

Well then, at least let us about it, to see what it is *to know Jesus Christ*, and him crucified. 'Tis the determination of this determined knowledge, *to Christ*, *to Christ Jesus*, *to Christ Jesus crucified*, to this only and no other object among them.

A knowledge this the most profitable, the most happy, the most glorious: even eternal life it is *to know Jesus Christ*, St. *John* xvii. 3. Nor does his Crucifying abate any thing of the glory of it. St. *Paul* makes it his only glory, *Gal.* vi. 14. with a *God forbid that he should glory in any thing*, as here *not know any thing else, but in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Indeed hence flows all our happiness, the wound in his side is the hole of the rock in which only the soul can lie secure; the water that issued out thence is the only laver to cleanse it in; the blood the only drink it lives by; the wood of the *Cross* the only tree of life; the title of it better to us than all the titles of the earth; the reproach of it better than all the honours of the world; the pains of it sweeter than all the pleasures under heaven; the wounds better cordials and restoratives to a sick soul, than all the Physick nature or skill affords. There is not a grain of that *holy wood*, but of more worth than all the grains of Gold that the *Indies* can afford. There is not a vain in that crucified Body of *Jesus* but it runs full with heavenly comfort to us. There is nothing in *Christ crucified*, but man glorified. Who indeed would not be determined to fix all his knowledge here, to dwell here for ever! but so immense and vast is this happy subject, that I must limit it; yet I shall give you notions that you may improve, whilst I tell you *to know Christ crucified*, is to know him

as we do other things by the four causes of it: the *efficient*, the *material*, the *formal*, and the *final*. So to know him is to know who crucified him, for what he was crucified, how it was he was crucified, and to what end he was crucified.

It was his own love that mov'd him to it, it was God that sent him and delivered him up to it, it was *Judas* that betrayed him to it, it was both the *Jews* and *Gentiles* that had the hand in doing it: And what know we hence but this, his infinite goodness, Gods unspeakable mercies, mans base ingratitude, this *mystery* in all, how vastly Gods purposes and mans differ in the same business, how infinitely good and gracious God is, even where men are most wicked and unthankful.

Know we then the *material* cause of his sufferings for a second, and the matter for which he suffer'd was our iniquities, *for the transgressions of my people*, says the *Prophet*, *was he smitten*, Isa. liii. 8. And to know this is to deplore it, to abhor and detest our selves, who were the causes of so vile using the Son of God.

Know we (3.) and consider the *formal* cause, the manner of his crucifying a death most cruel, most lingering, most ignominious, to have his back all furrowed with whips and rods, to hang naked upon the *Cross*, by the hands and feet, and them nailed to it through the most tender parts, where all the organs of sense are quickest; to be given vinegar and gall to drink when he most needed comfort, and refreshment; to be mockt and scofft at in his sorrow too, derided by his enemies, forsaken by his friends as he hung; to have the weight of all the sins of all mankind upon him; to have God as it were leave him to struggle under them without the least glimmering of his presence; to see in his soul all the horrors of all the sins of men; to feel in his body all the torments that a body so delicate beyond the bodies of the Sons of *Adam*, by reason of its perfection, must needs feel beyond all others, and groan and die under the fury of an angry God, now visiting for all the iniquity that were before or after, should be committed by the world. To know all this, and by this, no sorrows like his sorrows, is at least to sit down and weep at it; however not to pass by regardless of it.

And know we (4.) the end why all this was, even to redeem us from all our sins, or as it is in the *Chapter* before this, *ver. 30. That he might be made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that by his blood we might have entrance into the holy of holies, into Heaven it self*, Heb. x. 19.

This you all know, as well as I, every one will say he knows it all. Yet I must tell you, you do not know it as you should, if you sit not down and sometimes determine your thoughts upon it, unless you sadly meditate, and thankfully think upon it, unless you value the meditations and discourses of it above all other thoughts, all other talk, unless you set by other business ever and anon to contemplate this. To know in Christianity is to do more than fill the brain with Scripture notions, 'tis to fill the heart too with devout affections: therefore we read in Scripture of an understanding heart, and wisdom is said in the holy phrase to be seated there. And when the heart evaporates it self into holy affections, and desires Christ, then we are only said to know him.

But to know Christ *Jesus crucified*, is more than so; 'tis in St. *Paul's* meaning to be crucified with him, Gal. vi. 14. to take up our cross and follow him, to make profession of him, though we be sure to come to execution by it, to go with him as St. *Thomas* exhorts, though we die with him, to be

willing to suffer any thing for him, to deny our own wisdom and repute, and our selves for his service, to be content to be counted fools for his sake, our very wisdom and preaching, foolishness, if we may save any by it, to count all as nothing, so we may know him, and be known of him.

We cannot think much sure to be crucified with him, who was crucified only for us, to suffer something for him, who suffered all for us, if we but know and consider who it was was crucified, and for whom he was so, the Son of God for the Sons of men, the most innocent for the greatest sinners, the most holy for the most wicked, for such who even deny him after all he has done for them,

This speak we, this preach we, this profess we, this determine we upon with St. Paul to know, to think, to speak, to teach, to preach, to profess this, and nothing else; ever crying out to him with that good old Father, *Deus meus & omnia, Deus meus & omnia, This crucified Jesus is my God and all, this Christ crucified is my God and all*; all my thoughts, all my hearts, all my knowledge, all my profession; he is all in all, I know nothing else, I value nothing else, I know him though never so disfigured by his wound, I will acknowledge him though in the midst of the Thieves, I am not ashamed of him, though full of spittle and reproach, I will profess him though all run from him: alas, I know not any thing worth knowing if they take him away.

And yet to know him has one degree more: when our understanding knows any thing it does, says the *Philosopher*, become the same with it. So to know *Christ* then is to become like him, to know *Christ* to be anointed, is to be anointed like him also with holy graces: to know him *Jesus* a Saviour, is to be a Saviour to the poor and needy, to deliver the widow and fatherless from the hand of the oppressor: to know him to be crucified is to crucifie our affections and lusts. Thus we know him as he is here, and by so knowing him here, we shall at last come to know him hereafter; where we shall know him perfectly, know him glorified for here knowing him crucified, and all things then with him, for now not knowing any thing but him, know God, and happiness, and eternal glory, and our selves partakers in them all.

THE FIRST SERMON UPON Easter Day.

St. LUKE xxiv. 4, 5, 6.

And it came to pass as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining Garments.

And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

He is not here, but is risen.



And to day the day it came to pass. This the day wherein this great *perplexity* both rose and was resolved. It rose from the not-seeing the *body* of Jesus in the Grave, *ver. 3.* It was resolved by the hearing here, *he was risen* thence.

Thus rise the greatest perplexities still, and thus they are resolved. From the miss of *Christ*; which way soever, truly or falsely, conceived by us, they come, and at the very hearing of him again they vanish. To be sure, they stay not at all after he *is risen*, and we hear it; and God will not let it be long before we hear it; he will not suffer those to be long perplexed that seek *Christ* heartily, affectionately, and devoutly, though with some error in their heads, as here poor souls they had, if they have no wickedness in their hearts, and Spices and Ointments, good Works and Charity in their hands. Some Angel or other shall be sent to them ere long, to pacifie their troubled thoughts, to disperse their fears, and raise up their drooping heads.

Mary Magdalen, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, with other women, found it so to day, *ver. 10.* And to day also, and from this day now forward shall we so find it too, if we seek our Lord but with that affection, that holy fear, that humility, as they; so humbly *bowing down* our faces, so afraid to miss of him, so *perplexed* when he is from us.

This is a day when perplexities cannot stay, fears cannot tarry with us, our heads cannot long hang down; the news of it is so full of gladness of comfort and of joy. At the rising of this days Sun of righteousness,
our

our perplexities pass away as the clouds before the Sun, our tears melt as the dew before it, and we turn up our heads like flowers to the Sun beams. 'Tis a *day* the fullest of all good tidings, as the seal and assurance of all the good news we heard before it. The Angels fly every where about to *day*, even into the grave with comfortable messages. *why weepest thou?* says one. *Fear not,* says another, St. Mat. xxviii.6. *why seek you among the dead?* says a third. What do you at the Grave? *He is risen,* says the whole Choir; He whose rising is all your risings, who is your Saviour now compleat, and the lifter up of all your heads, and go but into *Galilee* and you shall see him.

But this only hearing of him must for this time content us, *we shall one day see him as he is*; till then if we hear of him with our ears, and feel him in our hearts, and see him in our conceits; if so hear as to believe him risen, and our hearts listen to it (for the heart has two ears as well as the head, nature has given to it such a form as has been observed in the dissections, to teach us, that our hearts within us, as well as our ears without us, are to give ear to him that made, to him that saves 'um) if they do, we need not be the least perplexed for not visibly seeing him. All believers that then were did not see him so; five hundred indeed we read of all at once, but they were not all that were then believers; *Not to all,* says St. Peter expressly, *but unto witnesses chosen before of God,* Acts x.41. There is a blessedness, and it seems, by the manner of speaking, somewhat greater, for them *that have not seen and yet have believed,* St. Joh. xx. 29.

Be we then content to *day* to hear that *he is risen*, with the first news and tidings of it. From a good mouth it comes, to good souls it comes, in good time it comes. From the mouths of Angels to good women, and very seasonably, when they were *much perplexed*, *much afraid*, and much cast down for want of such a message. And though we cannot here see *Christ* as we desire, yet be we pleas'd to see our selves, our own sad condition upon the loss of him in these womens perplexities, fears, and down-cast looks: our way to seek him, humbly with our faces down as not worthy to look up, reverently with fear and trembling as afraid to miss him, solicitously much perplex'd to want him, as they were in the *Text*. And that we may not give up our hope, be afraid, or cast down for ever, look we upon the bright *shining garments* of the two *Angels* here (for these *men* are no less) 'tis a joyful sight, and rejoyce at the good success that always follows them that so seek him, Angels and good news. The women found it here, heard the good news from the *Angels* lips. You must be content to hear it from mine, yet you know who says it, *Angelus Domini exercituum est*, the Priest is the Angel, or Messenger, that's enough, of the *Lord of Hosts*, too much for me poor sinful wretch; But look not upon me, but upon them that here first told the news, and see in the *Text* these three Particulars:

- I. The sad condition for a while of those that either are without, or cannot find their *Saviour Christ* in three Particulars: They are *perplexed*, they are *afraid*, they *bow down their faces to the earth*, they go all the while with down-cast looks.
- II. The only ready way to find him after a while; by being here *perplexed* for his loss and absence, by being *afraid* to miss him, by looking every where up and down to find him, or news of him; going poring up and down, looking vvhether we lookt before, and casting *down*, not our *faces*, but our selves also *to the earth* in all humility to search after him.

III. The

III. The good success at last of them that thus diligently, reverently, and humbly seek him in three points more: to see Angels, to be directed right, and be made partakers of the joyful news of a Resurrection, of Christs Resurrection by them, who is both the ground of ours, and the first fruits of them that rise.

The sum of all is this, That though it sometimes fall out to us that we lose *Christ*, or cannot find him for a while, and so fall into perplexities and fears, and go up and down dejected with down-cast looks, yet if we so seek him with a solicitous love, a reverent fear, and humble diligence, we shall meet Angels after a while to comfort us and bring us news of our beloved *Lord*, and find him risen or rising in us ere we are aware. And the close of all will be our duty, and the duty of the *day*, (1.) to make our selves sensible of the perplexed and sad estate of those that are without *Christ*, who have lost him in the Grave, or know not where he is, or how to find him, and thereupon (2.) so set our selves to seek him that we may be sure at last to hear of him, and be made partakers of his Resurrection.

'Tis a glad *day*, I confess, yet I begin with the gloomy morn that seem'd to usher it in to these poor women, their sadness upon the imagined loss of their dear *Lord*, truly representing to us the sad condition of those who are deprived of *Christ*, or think they are so. The glory of the *day* will appear brighter by this morning cloud; the news of the Resurrection will be the welcomer when we first see what poor, troubled, frightened, dejected pieces we are without it, we will have the higher thoughts of him, now risen, when we feel how disconsolate a thing it is to be without him, even without his body here though dead and buried.

And it came to pass, says the Text, that they were perplexed thereabout; and it will quickly come to pass that the best of us all will be perplexed to lose any thing of our *Lords*, much more his body, if we love him. They were good souls, such whose devotion and affection death it self could neither quench nor alter that were so here, that we might know even devout and pious souls may both err concerning *Christ*, and sometimes want him too; seek him sometimes, vvith these here, vvhere he is not, vvhere vve falsly imagine him to be, and not find him presently neither vvhen vve look him vvhere vve left him.

No vvonder, they here, poor vvomen, vvhere so perplexed. Men, the great St. *Peter*, knevv not vvhat to say to it, *ver. 12. departed wondring*. Indeed, it seems a vvonder at the first, that such vvho love *Christ* so dearly, seek him so early, should yet miss of him; that such too should be in so great an error about him, as to think the *Lord of life* could be held in death; bnt so poor a thing is man, that, as such, he is perpetually subject to error and mistake, and may thereupon easily lose the sight and presence of his *Lord*. The Spouse, in the *Canticles*, complains, her *Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone, she sought him, but could not find him, she called to him, but he gave her no answer, Cant. v. 6.* and thereupon tells the Daughters of *Hierusalem*, *ver. 8.* that she is sick of love; that is, so perplexed and troubled at his absence that she is not able to hold up her head any longer, no more than these are here.

Nothing certainly but doubts and perplexities can involve us vvhen vve have either lost our love, or fear it; to be sure, nothing but doubts vvhen vve have lost him vvho is the only truth that can resolve us;
nothing

nothing but perplext ways when we have lost him who is the Way. Which way can we resolve on when our way is gone? What can we think can hold him whom the Grave cannot? If in a seal'd Sepulchre under a mighty stone the dead body be not safe, where can we think to sit down in security?

To lose a token or remembrance of a friends how are we troubled! but to have his body stoll'n out of the Sepulchre, his Grave rifled, and his ashes violated, how impatiently would we take it? You cannot blame them for being much perplext for so great a loss.

I shall shew it greater in the *Mystery*. *The body is the Church*, and to have that taken from us, the *Church*, that glorious *Candlestick*, removed, and born away we know not whither, what good soul is there that must not necessarily be perplexed at it? What way shall we take when they have taken away that which is the Pillar of the truth, and should lead us in it? Whither shall we go when we know not whither that is gone, where they have laid it, or where to find it? Poor ignorant women, nay, and men too may well now wander in uncertainties (as they do) full of doubts and perplexities, full of cares and troubled thoughts which way to take, what Religion to run to, what to leave, and what to follow, seeing the body to which the Eagles use to flock, the most Eagle-eyed, the most subtile and learned used to be gathered, is removed away, and we have nothing to gather to, scarce a place to be gathered together in. Well may we now fear (2.) what will become of us, and what God means to do to us, how he intends to deal with us, having thus suffered our Lord to be taken from us.

Afraid they were, that they had lost him quite. I pray God we may have no cause to fear the same fear. When *Christ* was but asleep the *Apostles* were afraid at a blast of wind that rose, *St. Mat. viii. 25.* and cry out they perish whilst he but sleeps. Any thing scares us if *Christ* watch not over us; not the visions only of the night, but the very noises of the day, any light air or report affrights us, and blows us which way it please, to any side, any faction out of fear. What hold then is there of us, what little thing will not scare us when he is absent quite? When his body the *Church* is removed from us, where can we stay our wavering souls, or fix our trembling feet? *Christ* was no sooner dead and gone but away run all his *Disciples* into a room together, and shut up themselves for fear of the *Jews*, *St. Joh. xx. 19.* so coward-like and faint-hearted are we all when *the Captain of our Salvation* is slain before us; nor can it be other, all our life being hid in him, and all our spirit only from his presence.

Part of these womens fear, at least, was at the sight and congress of the *Angels*. Even *Angels* themselves do but scare us if the *Lord* of the *Angels* be not by us. Nay, even *God* himself is but a terror to us, and a consuming fire without *Christ*; 'tis with him only under the shadow and shelter of his wings that we dare approach that inaccessible light, that consuming fire. Lose we *Christ* and we lose all our confidence in heaven, all the ways of access to heavenly things, all the pleasure and comfort of them; we are nothing but agues, and fears, and frights, not courage enough even to look up; we with these perplexed souls go (3.) bowing down our faces to the earth.

Thou didst hide thy face from me, says holy *David*, and *I was troubled*; the very hiding of *Gods* face sore troubled him; What think you to hide his whole body would do then? Why; then he goes mourning all the day
long,

long, *Psal. xxxviii.6.* So did the two *Disciples* that went to *Emaus*, ver.17. they walkt sadly, and talkt sadly, and lookt sadly, like men disconsolate and forlorn, such as were ashamed to shew their faces in the City, after this was come to pass; durst not look any body in the face upon it. Alas! how could it be otherwise with them? All their hope was gone, he that they lookt should have redeemed *Israel* could not redeem himself; nay, his body stoln out of the Grave, and conveyed they knew not whither. Well may they bow down their faces to the earth having now little hope above in heaven, he being gone and lost by whom they only hoped and expected it.

Indeed, if he be either so gone from us, that we have no hope to find him, or he be found in that condition in which there is no hope, (as there is none in a dead Saviour, where ere he be) no wonder if our faces then bend wholly to the earth, if we look no further. Let us take our portion in this life, for we are like to have no other: without *Christ*, and *Christ risen* too, hither it is we fall, no looking higher, not an eye to heaven, so much as in a Prayer, if we have not *per Dominum Iesum, Christ Jesus* at the end of it; in and thorough whom only we can with confidence look for a blessing thence, and without whom at the end, the Prayer is to no end or purpose.

II. Yet in as sad a Condition as this we speak of, we are not utterly without hope if we again look upon the words at a second view. For now (2.) they as well decipher to us the condition of those that seek as of those that have lost their *Lord and Master*. We may be as much *perplexed* in our search as at our loss, as vvell afraid to miss, as startled at our loss, as vvell *bowdown* our faces to the earth in seeking as in sorrowing. And thus in the second view of the *Text* it is.

They had lost their *Masters body*, and vvere now not only troubled at the loss, but how to find it, vvhether to look it. Surely, take but away his *body* the *Church*, and the vvifest of us vvill scarce know to find him; one vvill run this vvay, another that vvay after him; one vvill stand vveeping at the Sepulchre, and think that a sad melancholy posture and business is Religion only; another vvill run thence from the Sepulchre as fast as he can, and think the finding *Christ* so easie a business that it does not require either a groan or a sigh; others vvill be vvalking to *Emaus*, up and down, novv to one Sect, novv to another, and from *Hierusalem* most commonly, from the City of peace, out of the bonds of unity, every one by himself, vvhich vvay pleases him, if *Christs body*, the *Church*, be once removed out of our sight. Our best vvay is, vvith the *Disciples*, into our Chambers altogether, till vve can get a better place, vvith all the company vve can make, to our Devotions and our Prayers; or if vve vvill step out a vvhile to the Sepulchre, let it be but to pay a tear upon it, to vent out troubled souls, to expresse how vve are troubled at our sins that have made us lose our *Lord*; or at our negligence, that he is slipt from us vvhilst vve vvere asleep, lull'd in soft pleasures; or at our slovenness, that vve come so late to seek him that he is gone before vve come. This is so to seek as to be *perplexed thereabout*, and there is no true seeking him vvithout it.

But (2.) vvith fear too vve are to seek him; *with reverence and godly fear*, Heb.xii.28. that the only acceptable service and seeking of him *with fear and trembling*, Phil.ii. 2. no hope either of Saviour or Salvation without it. *Afraid of the two men in shining garments* they were here: and if *Angels*, habited like men too, and in so chearful attire be so

terrible, vvhat think you is that *excellent Majesty*? if vve cannot see those our fellovv servants, as they stile themselves, *Rev. xxii. 9.* vvithout fear (for vve seldom read of the appearing of an *Angel*, but either coming or going he strikes some terror) hovv say some among us, that in the approaches to God vve need not be afraid? Alas, deluded souls! they conceive not God, or *Christ*, as either of them should be conceived; they neither seriously consider the *Majesty* of God or *Christ*, nor their ovvn unworthiness, nor hovv hard a thing it is to find *Christ*, that are not afraid either to miss him in the search, by their unskilfulness, or lose him by their sins. He that looks to be comforted by an *Angel*, must not think much to be afraid, hovv great a claim soever he conceives he hath in *Christ*. *Perfect love* indeed says the *Apostle*, *casts out fear*, but 'tis servile fear and no other. *Mary Magdalen* to vvhom *Christ* bears vvitness that *she loved much*, yet she also is *afraid*. The more for that she loved so much, for the more vve love the more vve fear to lose the thing vve love, the more vve love the more vve fear to offend the person vvhom vve love; nay, the more vve fear to miss; and the more earnest vve are too seek, the more likely are vve to find vvhat or vvhosoever vve set to seek for. Seek him vvith filial fear, or love and fear; that's the second.

Yet if vve seek *Christ*, vve must also thirdly seek him vvith our *faces bowed down to the ground*; and that is (1.) the fashion of those that seek earnestly: and so he must be sought vvith all the earnestness vve can.

And it is (2.) a token of diligence in the search, much like that of the poor woman that sought her groat, that lighted a candle, swept her house, rak'd in the dust, look'd into every corner, peer'd into every chink to find it. Do we so in seeking *Christ*, light up the candle of Faith kindled from the flame of love, sweep we the houses of our souls with the besom of repentance, look vve into our dust, consider vvhat vve are made of, vvhat poor dusty things vve are, ransack every corner of our hearts, every cranny of our thoughts: that so vve may if not find him there, yet make all clean for him against he comes, and vve shall commonly find he vvill come gliding in vvhen vve think not of it, vve shall hear of something rising in our dust after vve have so rais'd it, by the breaking and contritions of repentance.

And it is (3.) the posture of humility, and of the humble he vvill be found; they shall not miss of him vvhoever do; to them his grace *St. James iv. 6.* to them his vvays, *Psal. xxv.* to them his dwelling. The lovver vve bov down before him, the higher vvill he lift us up.

And lastly, the *face bowed down to the earth*, is the look of them that mourn, we must seek him as his *Father* and *Mother* did, seek him *sorrowing*, sorry that we have been so long vvithout him, that we so carelessly lost him, then after a day or two we shall be sure to find him: nay, if our sorrow begins, as here in the morning of the day, if we begin betimes to be exceeding sorrowful, the morning shall not pass e're we hear at least some tidings of him: nay, we shall not stir from the Grave but we shall hear it e're we go, some good *Angel* or other shall bring us some glad message or other from him, and tell us where he is. So it follows, *as they were perplexed, behold two men stood by them in shining garments, and as they were afraid, and bow'd down their faces to the earth*, this news they tell them, that *He is risen*.

God never faileth them that seek him, says the *Psalmist*, never them that seek him as these did, with careful and troubled souls, such he never does refuse, *Psal. li. with reverence and godly fear*, such he never does reject, *vwith earnestness, vwith diligence, vwith humility, vwith godly sorrow*, those he visits presently either by himself or by his *Angel*.

And which (2.) is very observable, and as comfortable, *as they were perplexed, and as they were afraid, and bowed down*, says the *Text*, that is, even when they began to be so, before their perplexities had misled them, or their fears undone them, or their faces lick'd the earth; as they began only to hang their heads, and their spirits began to faint, and their souls to be troubled, *two men* on a sudden, whence they cannot tell, and which way they came there they knew not; but there they stand to disperse both their sorrows and their fears, by what they have to tell them. Three grand points we observe in this *apparition* of the *Angels*, to make up that great success that those who faithfully and devoutly seek *Christ*, may promise themselves upon it.

1. They see a *Vision* of *Angels*. 'Tis their good hap ever to meet blessed *Spirits* who seek the *Lord of Spirits*, to meet them here, to be with them ever hereafter, to meet one or two of them here at times, to meet ten thousand times ten thousands of them hereafter.

To meet them here even at the Sepulchre in the midst of sorrow, even then to receive comfort from them, even in the Grave, in our greatest afflictions.

To meet them (2.) like *young men*, so says *St. Mark*, sprightly, and able to defend us.

To meet them (3.) in *shining garments*, tokens of some exceeding joy, and gladness, which we may expect, and shall find from them.

To meet them (4.) *standing* by us, that is ever ready to comfort and assist us.

To meet (5.) *two* of them together, not one single comforter alone, but comfort upon comfort, deliverance upon deliverance, spiritual and temporal, one at the right hand, and another at our left.

But lastly, hereafter to be sure, we shall meet them in full *Choirs*, when we rise out of our Sepulchres, then like young men indeed, both they and we, then to be always so, never die again, never grow old, nor our garments neither, but have them always shining.

The next point of the good success is to receive direction from them. Two parts of it there are first to recal us from the wrong; and then secondly to set us right.

Why seek you the living among the dead, he is not here; that's the correction of our judgments and affections: *He is risen*, that's the setting them to the right.

For a Traveller when he is out of the way, to be told he is so, is a thing any of us would take well; and when we are stragling out of the way to Heaven, going out of that safe, and fair, and happy way into the bogs of the world, and mires of lusts and ditches of Hell, to have an *Angel*, one of a thousand, as *Job* speaks, but a messenger of the *Lord of Hosts* to call out to us, that we are wrong, is certainly a happiness if we understood it; and such God sends always to them that seek him truly, if they will but turn their heads at the call, and look after him. Well but what says he that so calls out to us, *why? why seek you the living among the dead?* what's that?

I. They *seek the living among the dead*, that seek *salvation* by the *Law* of *Moses*, long since dead and buried.

II. They *seek the living among the dead*, that seek it by the *works* of *nature*, by the power of them: *Nature* without *Grace* is dead, *Verebar omnia opera mea*, says holy *Job*, there is not in us one poor work to trust to.

III. They *seek the living among the dead*, that seek *salvation*, that think to be sav'd by a meer outward holiness, by the outward body of *Religion* without the inward life, by forms of godliness, whether they be merely ceremonial performances of *Religion*, or great shows and pretences of godliness without the power of it in their lives and conversations.

They lastly *seek the living among the dead*. that seek *Christ* upon worldly interests, that take up their *Religion* upon by-respects, that do it for carnal or worldly affections. But say the *Angels*, He is not here. *Christ* is not here, *Christ* the Saviour is not, that is, our *salvation* is not to be found in the *Law* of *Moses*, or by the *Law* of *Works*, or in meer external performances, or great pretences, or in worldly and carnal hearts, they are but Graves and Sepulchres all; which we too much and too often bury our souls in, and stand weeping by, and are much perplexed at if we cannot find it there, but must be forc'd from thence to a new search; as here are the women are to leave these kinds of seeking, all of them, and betake us now to think of him as risen thence. For so the *Angels* say he is, *He is risen*. And in this he both tells us what to conceive of him, and at the same time to put off all our perplexities, and tears, and sorrows to rejoyce with him. *He is risen*.

Risen, and not rais'd; others indeed have been rais'd from death; the *Sareptans* Child, the *Widows* Son, one of these, *Mary's* Brother *Lazarus*; but none risen but he: he rais'd himself, they did not so; he rais'd them all, must raise us all too, will raise us by his Resurrection. For,

Risen, that is (2.) his *Body* risen, that is, we members of it to have part also in his Resurrection; for if our Head be risen, the Members also will follow after.

Must (3.) in the *interim* follow him, so raise our thoughts above the earth, as to seek him now above, to seek those things which are above; that's it the *Angel* directs us to, by telling us *he is risen*, so pointing us where now to fix our thoughts to leave the *Sepulchre* to bemoan it self, to cast off all the ways and paths of death, to throw off all worldly perplexities, fears, and sorrows, or in the midst of them to take a ray at least from their *shining garments*, and put on the looks of joy and gladness. This both the direction they give us, and the joy they make us partakers of.

To tell us he is risen whom we seek, he is alive whom we bemoan for dead; he that is our head, our hope, our love, our life, our joy, our comfort, our crown of rejoycing, he in vvhom vve trusted, vve may trust still, hope still, joy in him still, for he is risen and alive.

That's the close vve are novv to make to day, that the answer vve are to give to the *Angels* speech, that the application of the *Text*, to make it full, run vve once more over it.

Grovv vve then first as sensible as we can of our sad condition vvithout *Christ*, hovv the Grave, the last place of rest from all troubles, has nothing in it vvithout him, hovv our souls cannot be at quiet vvithout him

him, how our hearts cannot but tremble when he is gone, our spirits faint, our faces look sad and heavy, dull and earthy when he is from us; Let us upon this sit down, and weep, and be troubled, and tremble at it, that we may not at any time give him occasion henceforward to desert us, or leave us comfortless at the Grave, but send his *Angels* thither to direct and to conduct us to his joyful presence.

When we are thus made sensible what we are without him, we then secondly, certainly will make after him with all care and reverence, all earnestness and diligence, all humility and devout repentance, troubled at his absence, fearful of our own unworthiness, and truly humbled for our sins that drove him from us; perplexed to lose him, fearful to offend him, vigilant to seek him, that so at last we may recover him; for you see he is recovered from the Grave, and may again be by us recovered to our souls.

This the duty both our own necessities, and the opportunity of this great day require of us.

The business we are next to go about exacts as much. We are with these women come here to seek the *Lords body*, and I shall anon give you news of greater joy than here the *Angels* did the *women*. They say *he is not here*, but *he is risen*. I say, but *he is risen*, and *is here*, will be here by and by in his very *Body*. Your eye cannot see him, but your souls may there see and taste him too.

Lift up then your heads, O ye immortal gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, that the King of Glory may come in. Look up and lift up your heads, for your salvation draweth nigh. Bow down your faces no longer to the earth, neither look here as to an earthly business. Look not sad but cheerful now to day, (I hope you have looked sadly enough already in your Chambers upon your sins) you may here put on another face. Yet if you be somewhat perplexed and troubled at your sins, or afraid of your own unworthiness, or your souls and bodies bowed down as low as can be in humility, I shall say you are the fitter to receive your joys, and to be made partakers of the *Angels* company, which as the *Apostle* tells us, are present in holy places; and if ever, there, there more especially, at so great a mystery as this which they themselves bow down themselves to look into, and wing about us, say the *Fathers*, to assist the celebration all the while. You will be the fitter too to receive the joyful news, that this day brings us, of *Christs* rising; being only so cast down and prepared in all humility to receive it.

Yet learn we something from the *Angels* too as well as from the *women*; for behold, says the *Text*; as if it meant we should look upon them too, and learn by their standing constancy and resolution, by their clothing in shining garments, purity, and innocence, and all good works whereby we are so to shine as to glorify our Father which is in Heaven, by their correcting the good womens errours, to correct our own, and not let our Brother either perish or go astray for want of good and timely admonition, a prime work of charity which this business so requires; by their advice no longer to seek the living among the dead; no more to seek *Christ* for earthly profits or respects; and by their so readily publishing the news of *Christs* rising to be this day ever telling it, every day thinking of it, and so living as if we believed a Resurrection.

So shall it come to pass, that however we come, we shall not depart perplexed, but in peace; not in fear, but in hope; not in sorrow, but in joy; and shall one day behold him risen whom we now only hear is, and meet him with all his *Angels in shining garments*, in the robes of eternal glory.

He who this *day* rose, raise now our thoughts with these apprehensions, raise our thoughts to the height of these heavenly mysteries, make us this day partakers through them of his Resurrection by Grace, and in his due time also of his Resurrection to Glory.

THE

THE SECOND SERMON UPON Easter Day.

St. MAT. XXvii. 52, 53.

And the Graves were opened, and many bodies of Saints which slept arose.

And came out of the Graves after his Resurrection, and went into the holy City and appeared unto many.



And this is the third day since the first of these was done, since the Graves were opened; and the first day that all the rest, that the bodies of Saints arose, came forth, went into the holy City and appeared, the blessed day of our Saviours Resurrection. So we have both *Passion* and *Resurrection* in the Text, and not amiss; the one to usher in the other, the *Passion* the *Resurrection*, both comfortable, when together, to see the *Passion* end so glorious, the darkness of so sad an Evening open it self at last, after a little respite, into so lustrous a Morning, the most lustrous that Sun ever shone in, the most joyous thus to meet the Grave and the holy City, *Christ* and his *Saints* together.

This Day the very stones cry out, and send forth the deceased *Saints* as so many Tongues to speak the glory of their Redeemer. And if the graves open their mouths, can we hold our peace? If the dead bodies of the *Saints* appear to day in the holy City to celebrate the Day, shall not we appear with our living bodies in the holy Mount to do as much? The Grave cannot praise thee, Death cannot celebrate thee, says *Hezekiah*, Isa. xxxviii. 18. And the Dead praise not thee O Lord, says *David*, Psal. cxv. 17. Yet here they do. They thought then they could not, we see now they do; and shall not the living do so to? The living, the living, he shall praise thee, says *Hezekiah*, and But we will praise the Lord, says *David*; that's agreed on both hands that the living shall; the Father to the Children make known the truth of this days great wonder, declare it one to another from Generation to Generation, keep the Day in remembrance throughout all Generations.

Indeed if we be not more senseless than the Day, more silent than the
Grave,

grave, the house of silence, we cannot hold to Day, up and arise we will, and into the holy places to set forth the wonders of the day. *They that go down*, as the Psalmist speaks, *into the silence, and into the Land where all things are forgotten*, who are either *dead in trespasses and sins*, or are resolved to forget all that their Fathers have seen or done, or has been done for them, who are in the dark, the darkness of ignorance or error, departed from the Church, out of the marvelous light into the Land of darkness, they shew not of these wonders among the dead in their own Congregations, nor tell of the loving kindness, faithfulness, and righteousness of this Day, in that great destruction they have made. But we will, I hope, we that are among the living stones, in the Communion of holy Church, will praise the Lord, do as much as the Graves and now risen bodies wherever we appear.

For upon this Day, hang all our hopes. We were hopeless till it came; hopeless when it was come till we knew it, and no great hope of us if we forget it now it is. This Day Christ rose out of the Grave. If he had not risen, had had no Resurrection, there had been no hope of ours. If nor hope nor Resurrection, we had been of all men most miserable; and if we do not thankfully remember both, we are but miserable unthankful wretches; no sooner the Day forgotten, and such days put down, but all our happiness put down with them, we of all the Nations under heaven presently most miserable, miserable times quickly after this happy Day, with the rest of its attendants, was unhappily voted to be forgotten. So much does it concern our happiness with the Saints in the Text to solemnize it in the City, if the City intend either to be holy or happy, so much to make much both of all Texts and times that may bring it to our remembrance, all days and words, Texts and Testimonies either of Christs Resurrection or our own.

This Text then among the rest. Wherein we have both a Testimony and Evidence of Christs Resurrection, and a Pledge and Symbol of our own. Two general Points which we shall consider in the words. Or more particularly thus. A Testimony of the truth of Christs Resurrection, and an Evidence of the power of it. A Pledge of the certainty of our Resurrection, and a Symbol of the manner of it, both of our Resurrection to grace, and our Resurrection to glory.

The Testimony of the truth of Christs Resurrection (1.) in the bodies of the Saints arising, and coming out of their Graves. (2.) In their coming into the holy City, and there appearing unto many, telling and declaring it.

The Evidence of the power of his Resurrection to be seen (1.) in opening the Graves; (2.) In raising the Saints bodies that slept there; (3.) In sending them into the holy City; (4.) sending them thither to appear to many.

The Pledge of our Resurrection it is, (1.) that they that rise are of those that slept, Saints and members of the same body with us; that (2.) 'tis no phantasm, no phantastick or meer imagined business, for they appeared to many.

The whole business of their Resurrection is a Symbol and signification of ours, both of that to grace, and that to glory. (1.) Of that to grace; the grave, and sleep, the Symbols of sin and sleeping in it, the bodies rising thence, of the souls rising out of sin; their going into the holy City, of the souls passing from sin to righteousness and holiness; their appearing to many, of this righteousness manifested and

and appearing unto all. A *Symbol* (2.) it is of the *Resurrection* unto glory, where the *Grave* first opens, then the *body* rises, then into the *holy City*, into new *Hierusalem* it goes, and there appears and shines for ever.

Thus you have the *Text* opened as well as the *Graves*; we must now go on to raise such *bodies* of doctrine and comfort out of it, as may bring us all into the *holy City*, serve to make us holy here, and happy hereafter, partakers here of the *First Resurrection*, and hereafter in the *Second*. He that here opened the *Graves*, and raised the dead *bodies* out of their *sleep*, open your ears and hearts, and raise your understandings and affections, that we may all of us have our share in both, rise first to righteousness, then to glory; *Christ's Resurrection* is the *pattern* and ground of both, we therefore begin with that, with those words first that bear witness to the truth of it, that *Christ is risen*.

A double *Testimony* we gather of it in the words, from the rising of the dead *Saints*, and from their *appearing*.

It was a sign indeed that the *Resurrection* was well towards when the *Graves* began to open; we could not but see somewhat of it even in those dark Caverns, when they once began to let in the light; some hope of rising even when a body begins to yawn; some hope the body might come ere long to recover its long lost liberty when the prison doors were wide set open, and the shackles of death knockt off the legs; some sign and hope, I say, it would be so, that there would be a resurrection of some, of some one or other by and by.

But the *Graves* being opened at *Christ's Passion*, they could be but hopeful prognosticks at most of his *Resurrection*; a *Testimony* it could not be; but when out of these opened *Graves* the *Saints* arose out of their *sleep*, they could tell us more certain news of it than so. And being but members of that body of which *Christ Jesus* was the head, we must needs know the head is risen when the body is got up; the head first ere any member could, be it never so holy, never so much *Saint*. He is the head of the *Church*, says the *Apostle*, Eph. v. 23. and the *Church* the body, and if any part of the body be raised to life, the head you may be sure is; first too; For if *Christ* be the first fruits of them that sleep, 1 Cor. xv. 20. and the first begotten from the dead, as he is stiled, Rev. i. 5. If we see others risen, other dead bodies walking and alive, there is no witness more true than that he is. The first fruits ever before the crop, *Christ* the first fruits, afterwards they that are *Christ's*, says St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 23. out of order else; and the first begotten ever before all the rest; second, and third, and fourth, and all witness the first begotten was before them, the first begotten from the dead, risen before the other dead.

And it seems 'tis not a single witness, they were many dead bodies here that rose, and in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established, Deut. xvii. 6. much more in the mouths of many Witnesses,

And if these be from the dead, surely then the most incredulous will believe. Nay, Father Abraham, says Dives, but if one come from the dead they will believe, yea, and repent too, Luke xvi. 30. Here's more than one, here's many, that not so much as any of Dives his brethren, the most voluptuous, secure, customary, and obstinate sinner can be incredulous after this, or have reason to doubt the truth, or have the power to contradict it. To satisfy either particular curiosity, or infidelity, God does not use to send us messengers from the dead; he sends us to Moses and the Pro-

phets there, *ver. 29.* for our instruction; does not press men from hell or heaven, or raise them out of their beds of rest to send them on an errand to us (though perhaps little can be universally, though ordinarily it perhaps may be defin'd in this particular, for the ignorance we are under of the condition of the bounds and limits of the dead) *If they will not believe Moses and the Prophets, says Father Abraham, neither will they believe if one rise from the dead;* If they will not believe the living word, the word of the living God, no likelihood that they should believe the word of a dead man, especially when they cannot be certain but it may be the *devil, the father of lies* and falshood. But not of one only rising from the dead, that to be sure; no man so simple to venture his faith upon a single Testimony, and such a one as that. Or if he would, God does not use to do extraordinary miracles, where the ordinary means of probation or information are sufficient.

But in this great business that concerns all mankind he is pleased to step out of his ordinary course to give us for once some extraordinary satisfaction, that all Ages afterward might be sufficiently convinced of the truth of *Christs Resurrection* from heaven and earth by the Testimony of the dead and living, that there might be no occasion hereafter to doubt for ever. He raises therefore a great company to attend the triumph of his *Sons Resurrection*, and to bear witness to it.

2. And as it is not a single witness, so it is not secondly a single testimony; 'tis not from their rising only, but from their going into the *City*, and there *appearing unto many*. For sure neither their journey nor appearance was to tell stories of the dead, what is done either in the *grave, or heaven, or hell*, to satisfy the curious soul with a discovery of those Chambers of silence, or the *Land where all things are forgotten*; and therefore all forgotten, that we may know they remember when they come thence to tell us nothing that is there; their business was to wait upon their *Lord*, that had now set them at liberty from the *Grave*, and divulge the greatness and glory of his *Resurrection*. When *Moses and Elias* appeared upon the *holy Mount* at *Christs transfiguration, talking with him*, *St. Luke* tells us, they *spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Hierusalem*, *St. Luke ix. 31.* And 'tis highly credible the discourse of these *Saints* with those to whom they appeared was of his *Resurrection*. Their going into the *City* was not meerly to shew themselves, nor their appearance, meerly to appear, but to appear *witnesses* and *Companions* of their *Saviours Resurrection*.

Nor is it probable that the *Saints*, whose business is to sing praise and glory to their *Lord*, should be silent at this point of time of any thing that might make to the advancement of his glory.

Yet you may do well to take notice, that it is not to all, but *to many* only that they *appeared*, to such, as *St. Peter* tells us of *Christs* own appearance after his *Resurrection*, as *were chosen before of God, witnesses* chosen for that purpose, *Acts x. 41.* that we may learn indeed to prize Gods favours, yet not all to look for particular revelations and appearances. 'Tis sufficient for us to know so many *Saints* that slept arose to tell it, that so many *Saints* that are now asleep, *St. Peter*, and the *Twelve*, *St. Paul*, and *five hundred brethren at once*, all saw him after he was risen, so many millions have fallen asleep in this holy Faith, so many slept and died for it, that it is thus abundantly testified both by the dead and living, both by life and death, even standing up and dying for it; and a *Church* raised upon this faith through all the corners of the earth, and to the very ends of the world.

But

But to know the truth of it is not enough, unless we know the benefits of *Christ's Resurrection*: they come next to be considered, and there is in the words evidence sufficient of four sorts of them, (1.) The victory over sin and death, both the *Graves* were opened; (2.) The Resurrection of the soul and body, the one in this life, the other at the end of it, *many dead bodies that slept arose*; (3.) The sanctification and glorification of our souls and bodies, the dead bodies that arose out of the graves *went into the holy City*; (4.) The establishing us both in grace and glory, *they appeared unto many*. All these, says the *Text*, after his *Resurrection*, by the force and vertue of it.

Indeed, it seems *the graves were opened*, death almost vanquished, and the grave near overcome whilst he yet hung upon the *Cross*, before he was taken thence; deaths sting taken out by the death of Christ, and all the victories of the grave now at an end that it could no longer be a perpetual prison, yet for all that the victory was not complete, all the Regions of the Grave not fully ransackt, nor the forces of it utterly vanquisht and disarm'd, nor its Prisoners set at liberty, and it self taken and led captive, till the *Resurrection*; 'Tis upon this Point St. Paul pitches the victory, and calls in the Prophets testimony, *1 Cor. xv. 54.* upon this 'tis he proclaims the triumph, *ver. 55.* *O Death where is thy sting? O Grave where is thy victory?* even upon the *Resurrection of Jesus Christ*, which he has been proving and proclaiming the whole Chapter through with all its benefits, and concludes it with his thanks for this great victory, *ver. 57.*

So it is likewise for the death and grave of sin; the chains of sin were loosed, the dominion of it shaken off, the Grave somewhat opened that we might see some light of grace through the cranies of it by *Christ's Passion*, but we are not wholly set at liberty, not quite let out of it, the Grave-stone not perfectly removed from the mouth of it till the *Angel* at the *Resurrection*, or rather the *Angel of the Covenant* by his *Resurrection* remove it thence, remove our sins and iniquities clean from us.

2. Then indeed (2.) the dead soul arises, then appears the second benefit of his *Resurrection*; then we rise to righteousness and live, *1 Pet. ii. 24.* then we *awake to righteousness* and sin no more. So St. Paul infers it, *That like as Christ was raised from the dead, by the glory of the father even so should we also walk in newness of life, Rom. 6. 4.* This *Resurrection* one of the ends of his; our righteousness attributed to that, as our Redemption to his death.

From it it comes that our dead bodies arise too; Upon that *Job* grounds it, his *Resurrection* upon his Redeemers, *Job xix. 25.* *I know that my Redeemer liveth*; well, What then? Why, I know too, therefore, that *though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God.* The *Apostle* interweaves our *Resurrection* with *Christ's*, and *Christ's* with ours, his as the cause of ours, ours as the effect of his, a good part of *1 Cor. 15.* If *Christ* be risen, then we; if we, then he; if not he, not we; if not we, not he; And in the *Text* 'tis evident, no rising from the dead, how open soever the graves be, till after his *Resurrection*, that we may know to what Article of our faith we owe both our deliverance from death, and our deliverance into life here in soul, and hereafter in our bodies, by what with holy *Job* to uphold our drooping spirits, our mangled, martyr'd, crazy bodies, by the faith of the *Resurrection*; that day, the day of the Gospel of good tidings to be remembered for ever.

3. So much the rather in that 'tis a *Day* yet of greater joy, a messenger of all fulness of grace and glory to us, of the means of our sanctification (3.) of our rising *Saints*, living the lives of *Saints*, holy lives, and of our glorification, our rising unto glory: both doors opened to us now, and not till now, liberty and power given us to go into the *holy City*, both this below, and that above now after his *Resurrection*, and through it. *He rose again*, says St. Paul, *for our justification*, Rom. iv. 25. *to regenerate us to a lively hope* blessed be God for it, says St. Pet. i. 3. that we might be planted together in the likeness of his *Resurrection*, says St. Paul, Rom. vi. 5. grow up like him in righteousness and true holiness; and when the day of the general *Resurrection* comes rise then also after his likeness, be conformed to his Image, bear his Image who is the heavenly, as we have born the Image of the earthly, *our vile body chang'd and fashioned like his glorious body according to the working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself*, Phil. iii. 21. whereby in the day of his *Resurrection* he subdued death, and grave, and sin, and all things to him.

4. And to shew the power of his *Resurrection* to the full, there is an appearing purchast to us by it, an appearing here in the fulness and lustre of grace, such as may appear unto all men to be such, not a few, but many, many graces, all graces obtained by it; nay, *it does not yet appear what we shall be by it, but when we shall appear we shall be like him*, says St. John, 1 Joh. iii. 2. our righteousness and glory last for ever; *He died once*, says the Apostle, *but being raised he dies no more*; no more did these in the Text, no more shall we, but live for ever. Not only grace and glory, but perseverance in the one, and eternity in the other, apparently no less accruing to us by the vertue and efficacy of his *Resurrection*; good news from the grave the while, and from the late rais'd Prisoners of it, who are now thirdly as well the pledges of the certainty of our *Resurrection*, as the evidences of the power of *Christ*s.

A double Pledge we have here of our *Resurrection*, one from the many dead bodies of the *Saints* that slept, arising out of their graves: The other from their going into the *holy City*, and their appearing unto many.

In the first then are four particulars to assure us of it:

1. We find *dead bodies* here arising, to assure us such a thing there may be, such a thing there is as a *Resurrection* of the body; that bodies, be they never so dead, may be quickned, never so corrupted, may rise incorruptible; you may see them rising here. And,

2. Many of them there are, that we may see it belongs not only to a few, to some particular persons; this many is but the usher to St. Pauls all, *we shall all arise and stand before the judgment Seat of Christ*, Rom. xiv. 10.

3. *Saints bodies* they are said to be, and they are our fellows, members of the same body, and if one member be honoured, all the other members are honoured with it, says St. Paul, 1 Cor. xii. 26. Indeed, the bodies of the *Saints* only shall rise with *Christ*, rise to enter into the *holy City*, but all shall rise, for all shall appear, every one to receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad, 2 Cor. v. 10. they that have done good to the *Resurrection* of life, and they that have done evil unto the *Resurrection* of damnation, says he that rose himself to day, St. Joh. v. 29. For all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, ver. 28. none be left behind, though the best come first. The *Saints* have only the prerogative, not the only priviledge of the *Resurrection*.

For (4.) 'tis said, the bodies of them that slept, that we may know that

that all that sleep, that all that die, shall awake again and rise at last. He that lies down only to sleep, lies down to rise; and good and bad, how sad soever the ones dreams be, how full of terror soever be the wicked mans sleep in death, are both said to sleep, *Feroboam* and *Rehoboam*, *Baasha* and *Omri*, and *Ahab*, and *Foram* are said all of them to sleep with the *Fathers* as well as *David*, and *Solomon*, and *Joash*, and *Hezekiah*, *obdormierunt simul, they all sleep together* the sleep of death, and so shall likewise arise together; though as there is difference in sleep, some sweet, some horrible; so in rising too, some sad, some joyful when they awake: but sleep necessarily intimates and supposes some awaking and rising after it: 'tis else somewhat more than sleep. Thus by the rising of the dead bodies of these Saints, so many rising, rising as men out of their sleep, not as Saints, out of a privilege, we have one strong pledge of our Resurrection, of which they only lead the van after our great Captain the Lord *Jesus Christ*.

A second we have given us from both *their going into the holy City, and their appearing unto many*.

It was not *in obscuro, this thing was not*, as *St. Paul* speaks, *done in a corner*, not in a house or *Church-yard*, (where are all the apparitions we now hear of) not in a Country Village, no not an ordinary City neither, but in the great *Metropolis*, *Jerusalem* it self; call'd holy for what it had been, not what it was; for it was now the most sinful City: or called holy yet for the *Temples* sake, that yet stood firm: an *item* by the way to tell us how long a City may be stil'd holy, so long as the *Church* stands sacred and inviolate in it, and no whit longer. But be the City holy or not, that which is done there by many, is not likely a private business, has witnesses enow to give credit to it.

But to put all out of question, the there appearing unto many will certify it was no *phantasm*, no particular fanfie, or imagination of some silly, simple, or timorous persons, but a business of the greatest certainty; whether you take *many* for the *many*, or many people and folk together, or for *such who were before chosen*, as the *Apostle* speaks, *to be witnesses*, to whom the *Resurrection* should be reveal'd, as to men of credit, repute, and understanding.

Nor does the word appearing any way prejudice but confirm it, the word *εμφανίζω*, is from *εμφανίζω* to make plain and certify; to give us a full knowledge and manifestation of a thing, so us'd, *St. John* xiv. 21. *Acts* xxiii. 21. and xxiv. 1. when either persons or things really and truly appear before us. So the publickness of the place, the number and fitness of the persons, and the way and manner of appearance is evidence enough of their real Resurrection, and a second pledge to us that it concerns more than themselves, (though themselves were *many*, even the *many* they appeared to, too;) whole Cities, all Cities, holy and unholy, all the world, of which that City was but an emblem and signification; a place from whence God did as it were, out of his own house and palace, dispence his providence through all the earth: and the Saints besides thus going after the Resurrection *into the holy City*, an intimation whether the *Saints* go when they are risen; the whole action a *Symbol* of what is done in both the *first and second Resurrection*, what we are to do in the one, and expect in the other, or what is done both in the one and the other: and so lastly we now consider it.

For the similitude the *first Resurrection*, or the Resurrection of the soul from sin to righteousness bears to this of the *dead bodies* in the *Text*, we have it very like both for thing and order.

The

The Graves in which the souls lie buried are either our corruptible bodies, or corrupt passions, or stony hearts, or continued ill customs, which so entomb the spirit, that it lies dead without any spiritual life and operation. The opening of the Graves is the loosing the chains of those earthly affections, bodily depressions, wicked habits, and hardened hearts. The souls that are dead in trespasses and sins, are those dead bodies fuller of stench, and worms, and rottenness, then any dead body whatsoever, full of infamous and stinking sins, worms of conscience, and worms of concupiscence, rotten resolutions and performances: continuance in sin is the sleep of death. Holy purposes and resolutions are the rising out of it. Walking thenceforward in the ways of righteousness is going into the holy City, and the letting our righteousness so shine before men, that God may be glorified is the appearing unto many.

And the order is as like; our justification or spiritual Resurrection well resembled by it. God first for the merits of *Christ's Death and Passion*, breaks ope the stony heart, looses the fetters of our sins, and lusts, all worldly corruptible affections in us; opens the mouth of it to confess its sins; then the soul rises as it were out of its sleep by the favour of Gods exciting grace, and comes out of sin by holy purposes and resolutions, resolves presently to amend its courses: then next it goes into the holy City by holy action, endeavour, and performance; so goes and manifests its reconciliation to the *Church of God*, and at last makes its Resurrection, repentance, and amendment, evident and apparent to the world to as many as it any where converses with, that all may bear witness to it that it is truly *risen with Christ*, now lives with him. This the order, this the manner of our first Resurrection from the death of sin to the life of Grace.

Our second Resurrection to the life of Glory is but this very Resurrection in the Text acted over again. As soon as the *consummatum est* is pronounced upon the world, as soon as *Christ* shall say, as he did upon the Cross, all is finished, the end is come, the *Arch-Angel* shall blow his *Trumpet*, the Graves open, the earth and Sea give forth their dead, and the dead in *Christ* shall rise first; then they that be alive at his coming: For if we believe that *Jesus* died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in *Jesus* shall God bring with him, 1 *Thess.* iv. 14. and they shall come out of their Graves, and go into the Holy City, the new *Jerusalem* that is above, and there appear and shine like stars for ever. Indeed the ungodly and the wicked shall arise too, and appear before the great *Tribunal*, but not like these *Saints*, for into the *holy City* they shall not come; Rise and come forth they shall, but go away into some place of horror, some gloomy valley of eternal sorrow, some dark dungeon of everlasting night, some den of Dragons and Devils, never to appear before God, but be for ever hid in the arms of confusion and damnation.

As for the godly the *holy City* is prepared for them, for us if we be like them. *Saints* and *Angels* are the inhabitants of this *holy City*, no room there for any other; if our bodies then be the bodies of holy *Saints*, then into the *holy City* with them, and not else: no part in the new *Jerusalem*, if no part in the old; no portion above if none below; no place there with *Angels*, if no communion here with *Saints*; no happiness in heaven, if no holiness on earth. They are the *bodies* of the *Saints* you hear that go into the *holy City*, they that rise from the sleep of sin, and awake to righteousness, that rise from the dust of death to the rays of glory.

And this now may hint us of our duty to close with them for the close
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of all. It has been shewed before what is the *first Resurrection*, without which there is no *second*, namely a life of holiness; a dying to sin, and a living unto God. And this is a Resurrection we are not meerly passive in, as in the other. We must do somewhat here towards our own Resurrection, at least to finish it. We must open our mouths, which are too often what *David* stiles the wicked mans throat, even *open Sepulchres*, and by confession send out our dead, our dead works, confessing our iniquities; we must awake out of our sins, and arise and stand up by holy vows and resolutions, rear up our heads, and eyes, and hearts, and hands to heaven, *seek those things that are above if we be risen with Christ*, get up upon our feet, and be walking the way of Gods commandments, walking to him, get us into the *holy City* to the holy place, make our humble appearance there, express the power of *Christs Resurrection* in our life, attend him through all the parts of it all our life long.

This the great business we are now going to, requires of us more particularly, to come to it like new rais'd bodies that had now shaken off all their dust, all dusty earthly thoughts, laid aside their Grave-cloths, all corrupt affections that any way involv'd them, and stood up all new, all fitly compos'd for the *holy City*, drest up in *holiness and newness of life*, thus come forth to meet our new risen Saviour and appear before him. This the way to meet the benefits of his *Passion* and *Resurrection*: for coming so with these *Saints* out of their Graves, *Christs Grave* also shall open and give him to us, the *Cup and Patine* wherein his body lies as in a kind of Grave, shall display themselves and give him to us, the Spirit of *Christ* shall raise and advance the *holy Elements* into lively *Symbols* which shall effectually present him to us, and he will come forth from under those sacred shadows into our Cities, our Souls, and Bodies, if they be holy; and his grace and sweetness shall appear to many of us, to all of us that come in the habit of the Resurrection, in white Robes, with pure and holy hearts.

Here indeed of all places, and this way above all ways, we are likeliest to meet our Lord now he is risen, and gone before us: this the chief way to be made partakers of his Resurrection, and the fittest to declare both his Death and Resurrection, the power of them till his coming again.

And to declare and speak of them is the very duty of the day, the very *Grave* this day with open mouth professes *Christ is risen*, and gives praise for it, that it is no longer a land of darkness, but has let in light; no longer a bier of death, but a bed of sleep. But *shall thy loving kindness, O Lord, be known in the dark, or shall the dead rise up again, and praise thee?* yes, holy *Prophet*, they shall, they did to day: and if his loving kindness shall not be known in the dark, the dark places shall become light, now the *sun of righteousness has risen* upon them.

But shall the dead rise up again and praise him, and shall not we? shall the graves open, and shall not our hearts be opened to receive him, nor our mouths to praise him for it. Was it the business of the dead *Saints* to day to rise to wait upon their Lord, and shall not the living rise to bear them company? shall the whole City ring of it, out of dead mens mouths, and shall not our Cities and Temples resound of it? shall they tell the wonders of the day, and we neither mind the day, nor wonders of it? surely *some evil will befall us*, as said the *Lepers* at the Gates of *Samaria*, *if we hold our peace*. 'Tis a day of good, of glorious tidings, and we must not, lest the *Grave* in indignation shut her mouth upon us, and the *holy City*

bar us out. Open we then our mouths to day, and sing praises to him who made the *day*, made it a joyful day indeed, the very seal of happiness unto us: Open we our mouths and *take the cup of salvation*, as the *Prophet* calls it, *the cup of thanksgiving*, the *Apostle* stiles it, and *call upon the name of the Lord*. Open our mouths now as the grave, and he will fill them. Open our mouths as the grave, and be not satisfied, give not over our prayers until he do. Raise we all our thoughts, and desires, and endeavours to entertain him, go which way he shall send us, appear what he would have us, attend him whither soever he shall lead us, and when he himself shall appear, he will lead our souls out of the death of sin to the life of righteousness; our bodies out of the dust of death into the land of life, both souls and bodies into the *holy City*, the new *Jerusalem*, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain, but *all tears shall be wip'd away*, all joys come into our hearts and eyes, and we sing merrily, and joyfully; all honour and glory, be unto him that hath redeemed us from death, and raised us to life by the power and vertue of his *Resurrection*. All blessing, and glory, and praise, and honour, and power be unto him, with the Father and Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

THE

THE THIRD SERMON UPON Easter Day.

PSAL. cxviii. 24.

This is the day which the Lord hath made: We will rejoyce and be glad in it.



His is the day which the Lord hath made. And if ever day made to rejoyce and be glad in, this is the day. And the Lord made it, made it to rejoyce in. *ἡ δὲ ἡμέρα ἁγία τῶν ἡμερῶν*, as holy Ignatius, a day of days, not only a high day, as the Jewish Easter, St. Joh. xix. 31. but the highest of high days, highest of them all. A Day in which the Sun it self rejoyced to shine; came forth like a Bridegroom, in the robes and face of joy, and rejoyced like a Giant, with the strength and violence of joy, *exultavit*, leapt and skipt for joy to run his course, Psal. xix. 5. as if he never had seen day before; only a little day spring from on high, as old Zachary saw and sung, never full and perfect day, the Kingdom and power of darkness never fully and wholly vanquished till this morning light, till this day-star, or this day's Sun arose, till Christ rose from the grave as the Sun from his Eastern bed to give us light, the light of grace and the light of glory, light everlasting.

And this Sun's rising, this Resurrection of our Lord and Master, entitles it peculiarly the Lords making. This day of the week from this day of our Lords Resurrection, stil'd Lords Day ever since. And of this day of the Resurrection, the Fathers, the Church, the Scriptures understand it. Not one of the Fathers, says that devout and learned Bishop Andrews, that he had read (and he had read many) but interpret it of Easter day. The Church picks out this Psalm to day as a piece of service proper to it. This very verse in particular was anciently used every day in Easter week, evidence enough how she understood it. And for the Scriptures; The two verses just before; *The stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head of the corner.* This is the Lords doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes, to which this day comes in presently and refers, applied both of them by Christ himself unto himself in three several places, St. Mat. xxi. 42. St. Mar. xii. 10. St. Luk. xx. 17, rejected by the builders in his Passion,

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made the head of the corner in his Resurrection ; the first of the verses applied again twice by St. Peter, *Acts* iv. 10. and *1 Pet.* ii. 7. to the Resurrection. For these doings, these marvelous doings, a day was made, made to remember it, and rejoyce in it, as in the chiefest of his marvelous works. And being such, let us do it. Let not the Jews out-do us, let not them here rejoyce more in the figure, than we in the substance, they in the shadow, than we in the Sun. 'Tis now properly *Sunday*, this day, ever since, a day lighted upon on purpose for us, by the Sun himself, to see wonderful things in, and as wonderfully to rejoyce in. *Abraham* saw this day of Christs as well as *Christmas*, *St. Joh.* viii. 56. saw it in *Isaacs* rising from under his hand, from death as in a figure, says the *Apostle*, *Heb.* xi. 19. saw it and was glad to see it, exceeding glad, as much at least to see Christ and *Isaac* delivered from death, as delivered in to life. *Abrahams* children, all the faithful, will be so too to see the day when ere it comes. It now is come by the circle of the year, let us rejoyce and be glad in it.

I require no more of you than is plainly in the *Text*, to confess the day, and expresse the joy. Both are here as clear as day. *Dies Gaudii, & Gaudium Diei*, a day of joy, & the joy of the day. Easter day, and Easter joy. A day made, and joy made on it ; A day ordained, and joy appointed ; God making the day, we making the joy upon it. Or if you please, *Ordo Diei, & Officium Diei* ; An Order for the day, and an Office for the day.

The Order for the day, *This is the day which the Lord hath made*, order'd, and ordain'd.

The Office for it, *we will*, or let us rejoyce and be glad in it, *Exultemus & latemur* ; An office of thanksgiving and joy ordained and taken up upon it. The first is Gods doings, the second ours. And ours order'd to follow his, our duty his day ; the *Lords* day requires sure the Servants duty. Both together, Gods day and mans duty make up the *Text*, and must the Sermon. But I take my rise from the days rising. The Lords order for the day, *This is the day which the Lord hath made*.

Wherein we have,

(1.) The Day design'd ; (2.) The Institution made ; (3.) the Pre-eminence given it ; (4.) The Institutor exprest ; (5.) The ground intimated ; (6.) The End annexed. *This* designs the day. Gods making that institutes it. The *in* gives it the Preeminence ; the Lord is the institutor ; The ground is understood in the *This*, this day when that was done that went before, *ver.* 22. and the End by the annexing joy and gladness to it. Of these particularly and in order ; then of the Office *Exultemus, latemur*, and *in ea*, Outward and Inward joy, and our directing, and spending both upon it. But *hec est dies*, the day designed is our first design. *This is the day*.

This] first is a sign of a particular. God made all days, all in general, but this in particular. Particular days are of Gods making as well as others. God made such from the beginning, all days in the week, but the *Sabbath* in particular ; all days in the month, but the *New-moons* in particular ; all days in the year, but the *Feasts* and *Fasts*, the *Easter*, the *Pentecost*, the *Feast of Tabernacles*, the great *Kipparim* in particular, to his service in particular among the Jews. And among the Christians particular days may be observed too. *He that observes a day may observe it unto the Lord*, *Rom.* xiv. 6. And upon particular order we have such ; *Pascha nostrum immola-*

immolatum; our Pasſeover is ſlain, and we muſt keep a Feaſt, we have an *Eaſter*, 1 Cor.v.7,8. We have the *Lords day* thence, *Rev.* i. 10. and we may be *in the ſpirit upon it*; a *fiſt day of the week*, and we may *break bread*, *Act.* xx.7. and make collections upon it, 1 Cor. xvi.1,2. *Panem frangere*, and *Collectas facere*, make meetings, and celebrate Sacraments upon it. We have the *Apoſtles* at their *Pentecoſt*, *Acts* ii.1. *St. Paul* after that, making a journey to be at it, *Acts* xx.16. the Spirit deſcending on it, to ſanctifie it particularly to Gods ſervice, to take it, as it were, away from the *Jewiſh* into the *Chriſtian Kalendar*. We have a *hodie natus eſt*, a day for *Chriſts being born* taken up from the examples of an *Hoſt of Angels*, *St. Luk.* ii.10. by all Chriſtian people (for I can ſcarce call them Chriſtians any of them that deny it) ever ſince; a Day of his Incarnation too, whence the *Chriſtian Era*, all Chriſtian accompts of the year have ſince ever begun and run; a proof ſufficient to ſhew Chriſtians have their obſervations of days as well as Jews, particular Days and Feaſts, nay, and Faſts too upon *Chriſts in diebus illis jejunabunt*, his particular injunction of them, *St. Luk.* v.35. days all particularly made for his own ſervice.

The fault that the *Apoſtle* finds with the *Galatians*, *Gal.* iv. 10. for obſerving Days, and Months, and Times, and Years, was for the obſerving the *Jewiſh* ones, not the *Chriſtian*, for falling back to the beggarly rudiments of the Law, as he there expreſſes it in the verſe before, as if the *Gospel-Rites* were not ſufficient, or that they being afraid to ſuffer for the Croſs of *Chriſt*, ſtudied ſuch poor compliances to avoid it. Elſe ſome particular days have been always ſet apart to the more eſpecial and particular remembrances of Gods benefits and Chriſts; many of theſe days in the devouteſt and pureſt times, in the ancienteſt *Kalendars*. This of *Eaſter* in particular among the reſt. So particular that generally all the *Fathers* and *Interpreters* pitch upon it as the day deſign'd and deciphered here.

Other ſecondary interpretations, I confeſs, they make ſome of them, but this the prime, though to ſome other upon occaſion, or by the by they apply it too.

To the day of the Incarnation firſt. Then this ſtone, upon whoſe exaltation this day is founded, was cut out of the mountain without hands, *Dan.* ii. 34. Chriſts body fram'd without mans help.

2. To the day of his Nativity. Then *factus eſt in angulum*, this ſtone was made, made more plainly in little *Bethlehem*, a corner of *Judaea*.

3. To the day of his Paſſion. Then he was rejected by the builders, the *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, and people of the Jews; *Nolumus hunc*, take him who will, *we will not have him*; diſallowed indeed then of men, ſays *S. Peter*, 1. *Pet.* 2.4.

4. To the day of the *Gospel*, the whole time wherein that glorious light diſplaies it ſelf to all the corners of the world.

5. To the weekly *Lords day*, the Chriſtians day of reſt and joy, the weekly Reſurrection day, that roſe, as *St. Hierom* ſpeaks, *poſt triſtia Sabbata*, out of the ſad *Jewiſh Sabbath*, after the ſad *Saturday* of Chriſts Paſſion to the primacy over the other days.

6. To the day of the general Reſurrection, when this ſtone, *elect and precious*, as *St. Peter* ſtiles it, ſhall appear in its full brightneſs and glory to all the corners of the earth, at which day we are bid by our Saviour to look up and liſt up our heads, *S. Luk.* xxi.28. that is, to rejoyce and be glad when we ſee it coming.

7. To *Chriſt* himſelf it is applied, the day in this verſe as well as the

stone in *ver. 22*. He is both *Daniels* and *David stone*, *Zacharies* and *Dauids* day-spring or day. *Ego sum dies*, St. *Ambrose* reads it for *Ego lux*, I am the day, and he that walketh in the day, in me, he stumbleth not, St. *Joh. xi. 9*.

Nay, lastly, we find it sometimes applied to any day of famous and notable mercies and deliverances, wherein any great blessing has been given. Thus to the letter 'tis here applied to *Dauids* coming to the Crown after his long being rejected by *Sauls* Party. Thus in the Council of *Constantinople* under *Agapetus*, for the blessing or election of *Cyriacus*, a most learned and pious Bishop there.

But all these though they may be applications, they are not so properly explications of this day. To this of *Easter* it most fully points. Then the stone so lately rejected by the builders became the head stone of the corner, the head of the Church, to unite both corners of the building, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, into one holy Temple: then were the hearts of the Disciples fill'd with joy and gladness, St. *Joh. xx. 20*. the Prophecie here fulfill'd, the joys completed in the exaltation of the Son of David, which the Jewish people here began for the exaltation of David, but prophesied of Christ, though perhaps they knew no more than *Caiphas* what they said.

The *Incarnation*, the *Nativity*, the *Passion*, the time of the *Gospel*, the *Sunday* or *Lords day*, the day of the *Universal Resurrection*, the particular days of Gods mercy to us are all days of Gods making, and to be kept and celebrated with joy, even the *Passion* it self with spiritual joy and gladness; and Christ is the day that gives light to all these days, enlightens all, yet both day and joy, and the Lords making of them to us, can fit nor one, nor all of them so properly as this day that now shines on us, *Easter day*.

2. Thus we have found which this day is, what day it is that is here so particularly design'd, and pointed out, which in the *Text* is said to be made, and now to be considered how or what 'tis made. Of common days 'tis said only that they be or are, so the evening and the morning were the first day, *Gen. i. 5*. and the evening and the morning were the second day, *ver. 8*. and so of all the rest. The Evening came, and the Morning came, light and darkness succeeded one another, so the day came, no making else. But of this 'tis punctually said that it was made, something in it, or in the making more than ordinary.

Made (1.) that is, made famous by something done upon it; death, and hell, and all the terrours of darkness this day put to flight for ever by Christ's only Resurrection.

Made (2.) that is, appointed and ordained for something. So *Deus fecit Dominum & Christum*, God is said to have made our Saviour Lord and Christ, *Acts ii. 36*. and of Christ that *fecit nos Reges & Sacerdotes*, that he made us, that is, ordained, us Kings and Priests, as God had him both Lord and Christ, and upon this day both; so that 'tis no wonder if the day too be said to be made, made, or ordained and appointed to be remembered.

Made (3.) to be celebrated too, to be kept anniversary as a solemn day of joy and gladness, of Praises and Thanksgivings. Thus *facere diem Sabbati*, *Deut. v. 15*. & *Pascha facere*, St. *Mat. xxvi. 18*. is to keep the Sabbath and the Paschever; what is there in *Latine* to make the Sabbath and the Paschever, in our *Englisb* is to keep them, to make up, or make out the day in Gods Worship and Service. When God is said to make a day, 'tis for himself, and we can make none but to him; mar days we do when

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we spend them upon any thing, or any else, they are never made but when on him. The greater sin theirs then that unmake the days that are thus made, that both unfaint the Saints, and unhallow the days, and prophane both; that make them for all but him, all business but his, as if the holiness of the *Holiday* were the only offence of it, that which made the day, or for which the day was made, the only reason to them to unmake it.

3. But however it pleases some to mar what God has made, yet made days there have been many, are, and shall be. Themselves are not yet so impudent to deny us all, not the *Lords days* yet, which yet are but so many little models of this great day. But of *made days* all are not alike; some high days, some not so high, though the one and the other made and constituted for Gods service. Of *made days* this is the highest; *hinc*, *The day*, so we told you out of *Ignatius*; so we now tell you out of *St. Augustine*, *Principatum tenet, 'tis the prime*. As the blessed *Virgin* among women, so this blessed *day* among the days, says he. The most holy Feast of *Easter* the good *Emperour Constantine* calls it four times in one, *Epistle* to all the *Churches*, *Solenne nostra religionis festum*, a little after, the *solemn Feast of our Religion*, by which we hold our hopes of immortality, the very day of all our Religion and our hope. *Illa videtur dies clarior illuxisse*, sings *Lactantius*. The fairest day that ever shone. The Sun, which so many hours withdrew its light, and hid its face in sable darkness, went down sooner into night at our Saviours Passion, and to day rose so much sooner, restored those hours to lengthen, or encreased it beams to enlighten this glorious *Day* in the opinion or else Rhetorick of *Chrysologus*, *Eusebius*, and *St. Augustine*. If so, it was *The Day* indeed, none like it ever since; but if not, There were two Suns rose to day to enlighten it, the Sun of Heaven, and the Son of God; who is also stiled the Sun in the strictest spelling, *The Sun of righteousness*; needs must it be a glorious day indeed which is gilded with so much light, so many glorious Rays.

All days were night before, nothing but dark clouds and shadows under the *Law of Moses*, nothing but a long unavoidable night under the *Law of nature*, nothing but a disconsolate night of sorrow under the power of sin and darkness, this was the first bright *day* that dispell'd all darkness quite. A kind of spring of day or glimmering twilight there was abroad from the first preaching of the Gospel, but men could scarce see any thing; not the Disciples themselves; their eyes were ever and anon held, not fully opened, till the grave it self was this *day* opened, and gave forth Christ to open the *Scriptures* to them by the evidence of the Resurrection. *Hinc*, *this is the day* when all this was done, when this marvelous light shone forth, to enlighten all the world. The day of all the days before or since.

4. And now (4.) it may well be so when the *Lord made it*. All his works are wonderful, all perfect and complete, deserve Articles and Notes to be set upon them. But when he sets the Note himself, and gives the Article, then to be sure 'tis somewhat more than ordinary, somewhat he would have us to observe above the rest. And when he entitles himself to it, or challenges it unto himself, day it self is not more clear than that such a *day* must be observed.

Things that are exceeding eminent, and full of greatness, wonder, or perfection, are commonly attributed unto God. This *day* is such at least, because 'tis said God made it; a peculiar work and Ordinance of his, more than the common Ordinance of day and night; and if God made

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it, what is man that he should mar it, or the son of man that he should unmake it? Or how dares man, or Son of man make little of that which God made so great?

So great as to call it his; so great as to make it the mother of one and fifty daughters, of all the *Lords days* in the year besides. *This is the Lords doing* indeed. None could alter the *Sabbath* into the *Lords day* but he. None put down that, and set up another, abolish the Seventh, and set up the First, but the Lord of all, and may do all, what he pleases in heaven and earth, Lord it every where how he will. Herein he shews he is the Lord, and this *day* the Lady of the year, from whence so many little weekly *Easter days* take both their rise and name. All the former days God made, the Lord made this, the Lord Christ the ground and Author of this day, Christs rising raising this to that height it is.

Now God or Christ is not only said to do or make that which they do immediately by themselves, but that also which they do by those to whom they have committed such authority. So Christ tells us, *St. Luke x. 16. He that heareth you heareth me*; he that heareth his *Apostles*, his *Church*, his *Ministers*, heareth him himself; their commands are his, their orders his, so long as they are not contrary to his word. And thus we may evidently without much labour deduce the day to be his making.

From the *Apostles* times it came. *Palicarpus*, that *Angel*, as is conceived, of the *Church of Smyrna*, *Rev. ii. 8. kept Easter*, saith *Ireneaus*, with *St. John*, and with the rest of the *Apostles*, *Euseb. l. 5. c. 26.* The great difference about the time of keeping *Easter* between the *Eastern* and the *Western Churches* was grounded upon the different keeping of it by the two great *Apostles*, *St. Peter* and *St. John*: *St. John* keeping it after one reckoning, *St. Peter* after another; *St. John* keeping it, after the Jewish reckoning, upon the fourteenth of the month *Abib*: *St. Peter* much after the account as now it stands, upon the *Sunday* following; but all the controverſie was about the time, not about the keeping it; none denied or questioned that but *Aerius*, none left it at liberty but the *Cathari*, both registred for Hereticks about it. So confident were they 'twas from the Lord.

And that from him, at least by the *Apostles*, *Constantine* in *Eusebius* is direct. *ἡμεῖς ποιεῖν τὸ πᾶν ἡμέρας ἀπὸ τῆς παύσεως ἰστούμεθα*, which day (says he) ever since the first day of his Passion we have kept untill this present, We have received it of our Saviour, says he a little after. And again, which our Saviour deliver'd to us. Thus *Dominus fecit* then indeed. And that so it was either from his own command, or from his *Apostles*, the whole practise of the Church is ground enough, in all Ages still observing it, even in the hottest times of persecution, some in Caves, and some in Woods, and some on Shipboard, and some in Barns and Stables, and some in Goales, keeping it as they could, says *Eusebius*; so scrupulous were they of omitting that day upon any hand that the Lord had made them: and the great contentions about the time of keeping it shews as plain they thought it more than an humane institution; they might else have easily ended all the Controverſie, and laid down the day.

But they had not then so learned Christ, had not learned the trick of lightly esteeming days and places, and things, and persons, and offices dedicated to Gods service, which God had made, or were made to him.

5. Especially made upon such an occasion as this *day was*. This *day*; What day is this? The *day* wherein the *Stone* that was disallowed by *Men* was approved of *God*, and exalted to the *head of the corner*. Wherein the chief *corner stone* of *Sion* was laid, and *Sion* begun to be built upon it, when we had ground given to build upon, and stones to build with by *Christs Resurrection*; that's the ground and occasion of the day. And a good one too: For had he not risen we had had no ground to build upon, we had perish'd in our sins, been swept all away like so many houses builded upon the sand. We had had neither place for faith, nor ground for hope; nor room for preaching, our *preaching vain, your faith also vain*, all vaine, all come to nothing. His being delivered for our offences had been nothing if he had not been raised again for our *Justification*, as it is *Rom. iv. 25*. 'Tis to this day we owe our *Justification*; 'tis from this day we are made just, and holy, from this *Stones* being made the *head stone of the corner* we made *lively stones, built up into a spiritual house* or building, as *St. Peter* speaks, *1 Pet. ii. 5*. From his becoming this *day the chief corner stone* it is in that we now have confidence, as *St. John* speaks, and creep not into corners to hide our faces, that we dare boldly look up to heaven, and come unto him, and that we call not to the Hills to hide us, or to the Mountains to cover us from the presence of *God*, or the face of man or devil. Our faith and hope, our souls and spirits are all raised by this days raising, we are all made by this days being made, we had else better never have been made, for we had been marr'd and undon for ever.

6. But by this *day* it seems we are not: for this rejoycing and gladness that now follows close upon it shews what a kind of day it is, for what 'tis made, even to be glad and to rejoyce in, a Feast, or Festival. *God* is no enemy to the *Churches Feasts*, whoever be; calls to us to blow up the Trumper for Feasts, as well as bid us to proclaim a Fast. Indeed he more properly makes the Feast, and we the Fast, for he only gives the occasion of the one, and we of the other; he benefits, and we sins; *Deus nobis hac otia fecit*. So no wonder that the *day* that he has made, be a good day, a day of good things, such as we may well rejoyce in, a Festival.

Yea, and a set one too. His making, you heard, was an appointing or instituting it. Though *God* would sometimes have free-will Offerings, he will not always trust to them. If he leave all to the wills of men, the fires will oft go out upon his Altars, his house stand thin enough of people, and his Priests grow lean for all the fall of his Sacrifices, if he come once to the mercy or courtesie of men. They would quickly starve him and his Religion out of doors. But set Feasts he always had, set Services and offerings, would not leave himself or his Worship to mans devotion, for *he knew what was in man*. He made this *day*, made it a *Feast*, a day of joy and gladness; Let us now therefore to our Office, to rejoyce and be glad in it; that's the second General, thither now are we come.

Three Points we told you we would consider in it, *Exultemus, Latemur* and *in ea*. Three parts in our Office, rejoycing, gladness, and the right ordering both. Outward expression, inward gladness, and right placing them. Both words, I confess, ἀγαλλιασώμεθα and ἐνδοξάζομεν, in the *Septuagint*, & *exultemus*, & *latemur* in the *Latine*, have something outward in them; yet *exultemus*, is more for the outward, *latemur*, somewhat more within;

within, a joy of the heart with some dilatation only of it, *Latitia quasi latitia*, a stretching out the heart, and sending forth the Spirits; *exultatio* of *saltatio*, a kind of skipping or leaping for joy, the Spirits got into all the parts and powers, ready to leap out of them for joy.

Being thus both involv'd one in the other, I shall not trouble myself to distinguish them, but only tell you hence, that first, The joy that God requires in the things that he has made, or any time makes for us is not only inward, it must out into outward acts. Out into the mouth to sing forth his praise, in *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and *Spiritual Songs*, *Eph. v. 19.* Out into the hands to *send portions to the poor for whom nothing is prepared*, *Nehem. viii. 10.* Out into the feet to go up to the House of God with the Posture as well as the *voice of joy and gladness*, to go up with haste, to worship with reverence, to stand up cheerfully at the Hymns and Songs of Praise. Our very bones, as *David* speaks, to rejoyce too; the very clatter'd bones to clatter together and rejoyce, all the parts and powers of the body to make some expression in their way and order.

But not the powers of the body alone, but all the powers of the soul too. *Praise the Lord O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name, Psal. ciii. 1.* Our souls magnifie the Lord, our Spirits rejoyce in God our Saviour, our memory recollect and call to mind his benefits, and what he has done for us, our hearts evaporate into holy flames, and ardent affections and desires after him, our wills henceforward to give up themselves wholly to him as to their only hope and joy. 'Tis no perfect joy where any of them is wanting. 'Tis but dissembled joy where all is outward. 'Tis but imperfect gladness where all is within. It must be both. God this *day* raised the body, the body therefore must raise it self, and rise up to praise him. He this *day* gave us hope he would not *leave our souls in hell*, fit therefore it is the soul should leave all to praise him that sits in heaven. He is not worthy of the day, or the benefit of the day, worthy to be raised again, who will not this *day* rise to praise; not worthy to rise at the Resurrection of the just, who will not rise to day in the Congregation of the righteous to testify his joy and gladness in the Resurrection of his Saviour, and his own. He is worthy to lie down in darkness, in the Land of darknes, who loves not this *day*, who stands not up this *day* to sing praises to him that made it.

And now I shall give you reason for it out of the last words, *In eâ, in it.* In it. and for it. As short as they are they contain arguments and occasions, as well as time and opportunity to rejoyce in.

Rejoyce first *in it*, because this *day* it is, a particular *day* of gladness and rejoycing. Let us do what the day requires. 'Tis a day of joy, designed for it, let us therefore *rejoyce in it.*

Rejoyce (2.) because the *Lord made it.* All the works of the Lord are matters of joy to the spiritual man, even sad *Days* too; much more glad days, such as this.

Rejoyce (3.) because the Lord's people have ever made it such. God has always made them to rejoyce in it, to contend and strive who should do it best or nearest to the point.

Be glad (4.) for the occasion of it, the Resurrection of our Lord and Master, and the hopes thereby given us of our own; all benefits of Christ were this *day* sealed unto us, all his promises made good, all so
hang

hang upon this *day*, that without it, *we of all men*, says the *Apostle*, had been *most miserable*; none so fool'd, so wretched, so undone, so miserable as we.

Rejoyce (5.) because God bids us; 'tis an easie and pleasant Precept. If we will not be glad when he commands us, certainly we will do nothing that he commands us, especially when he gives us so great occasion of joy when he commands it.

Rejoyce (6.) because the very Jewish people do it here. They had but little cause of joy compared to ours; they saw but a glimmering of this joy at most, saw the Resurrection but afar off, and yet you hear they cry out, *we will rejoyce and be glad in it*. And is it not a shame that we Christians, who see it clearly, and pretend to believe it fully, should not as much exceed them in our joy, as in our sight, in our gladness as in our faith? Clearly so it is.

Rejoyce (7.) because *it is a good thing to rejoyce*; to rejoyce in Gods mercies and favours to us, in Christs Crown and glory, in his *day* and way. The very *Angels* themselves put on this *day* the white garments of joy and gladness, we find them in them, St. *Luke* xxiv. 4.

Rejoyce lastly to *day*, because this *day* is the first of all our *Lords days* ever since. We count them *feasts* and *days* of joy, and we meet together upon them to rejoyce in, to give God praise, and thanks, and glory. 'Tis a piece of worse than non-sence to say we are to do it upon these days, and not on *this*, from which only and no other they had their rise and being. All that we commemorate or rejoyce in on every *Sunday* is more eminently and first in this: this the great yearly anniversary of that weekly Festival, the time as near as the *Paschal circle* can bring it to the time that the Resurrection fell upon.

For these, and for this *day*, so made to mind us of all these, let us now take up the resolution of these pious souls, *we will rejoyce and be glad in it*, in the *day*, and on the *day*, and for the *day*; that's the very work and business of the *day*, *opus diei in die suo*, the proper work of the *day* in the *day* it self.

And here is now a way particularly before us to rejoyce in. *Latari* is taken sometimes for *letæpulari*. To rejoyce is to eat and drink before the Lord in his House or Temple, so *Deut.* xiv. 26. *And thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoyce, thou and thy household*. Here now we are before him, the *Table* spread, and our banquet ready, let us eat, drink, and be merry, and rejoyce before him; only rejoyce in fear, and be glad with reverence. *This is the day which the Lord made*, and all Christians observed for the celebration of this holy Banquet and *Communion*; Never let the day pass without it; excommunicated them that did, that did not one day or other of or about *Easter* receive the blessed Sacrament; the greatest expression of our *Communion* with God, and Christ, and all his Saints, and our rejoycing in it. You may see this people in the *Psalms* within one verse, blessing him that cometh in the name of the Lord, blessing the Minister that comes with it, wishing him and all the rest that be of the House of the Lord good luck with their business, Gods assistance in his Office and Administration. And in the next verse calling out aloud, *God is the Lord which hath shewed us light*, *Bind the Sacrifice with cords even to the horns of the Altar*, God has shewed us light, and made us a *day*, let us now bind the Sacrifice, the living Sacrifice of our souls and bodies, with all the cords of holy vows and resolutions, even to the horns of the Altar, and there sacrifice and offer up our selves, even unto our

blouds, if God call to it, all our fat and entrails, the inwards of our souls, our hearts and all our inward spirits, the fat of our estates, our good works and best actions, the best we have, the best we can do, all we have, or are, even at the Altar of our God with joy and gladness; glad that we have any thing to serve him with, any thing that he will accept; that we have yet day and time to serve him, that he has not cut us off in the midst of our days, but let us all live to see this *day* again, and have the liberty as well as occasion yet to rejoyce in it. Upon this comes in *David* now presently with *Thou art my God and I will thank thee, Thou art my God and I will praise thee*: O let us do so too. cry out one to another, as the *Psalm* concludes, *O give thanks unto the Lord for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever*. Turn all our rejoycings into thanks and praise, make it a *day* of praise, that so rejoycing worthily this day we may be thought worthy to rejoyce in that *day*, opening and dilating our hearts and mouths with joy to *day*, in this *day* of Christs particular Resurrection, we may have them fill'd with joy and gladness at the day of the general Resurrection, this *day* of the Lord convey us over happily to that, these our imperfect joys be advanced or translated into everlasting ones, into a day where there is no night, no sorrow, but eternal gladness and rejoycing for evermore.

THE

THE FOURTH SERMON UPON Easter Day.

St. MAT. xxviii. 5, 6.

And the Angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye : for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified. He is not here, for he is risen as he said, Come see the place where the Lord lay.



Ut is He not here? what do we then here to day? Come see the place where the Lord lay! Why, 'tis not worth the seeing now, 'Tis but a sad place now He is gone. No place worth the seeing or the being in, if He who is our being be not there. Old Jacob's descendam lugens in infernum, is all that we can look for, we must go down with sorrow to the grave.

But fear not, though. Our Lord, indeed, is gone, but risen and gone away himself; they have not stoln him away. He's past stealing, He's risen and alive. Nor is he gone so, neither, but we may find him anon again in some better place. Had we found him here in the grave to day, it had been sad indeed. He had been lost, and we had been lost, and both lost for ever. He is risen, He is not here, are the words that disperse the clouds and clear up the day, make it so clear, that *Videtur mihi hic dies ceteris diebus esse lucidior*, says St. Augustine, *Sol mundo clarior illuxisse, astra, quoq; omnia & elementa latari*. Never any day so bright. The Sun, the Stars, and all the Elements more sprightly and glorious to day than ever, they even dance for joy. The Angels themselves to day put on their glorious Apparell, bright shining Robes to celebrate this glorious Festival at the grave, ver. 3. A place where they this day day strive to sit: sent thither to dispel our fears, and disperse our sorrows, and raise our hopes, and advance our joys.

And indeed it was no more then needed when this day first arose; no more then what needs still to those who seek Jesus which was crucified, who go out with these tender hearts to the grave to weep. They need comfort and encouragement, direction and other assistance too. They lie open to fears and troubles, to errors and mistakes often in their seekings.

They had need of an Angel to guide them, and the news and certainty of a Resurrection to support them; and by this we find here, shall so find it if they truly seek him.

This is the business both of the *Text* and of the *Day*. The whole business of the *Angel* here, and of his speech to the *women* that sought *Jesus* ~~that was crucified~~. In which when I have shewn you,

I. The *Persons*, the *Angel* speaking it, and the *women* to whom it was spoken. I shall shew you then,

II. In the speech:

So, what (1.) to disperse the *fears*.

So, what (2.) to approve and encourage the *endeavours*.

what (3.) to correct the *search*.

So, what (4.) to inform the *judgments*.

Somewhat (5.) to confirm the *faith* of those who here seek, or shall at any time hereafter set themselves to seek *Jesus* which was crucified.

For (1.) *Fear not ye* says the *Angel*; there our *fears* are dispersed. (2.) *I know you seek Jesus which was crucified*; there our *endeavours* are approved of or encouraged. (3.) *He is not here*, There's our *search* corrected. (4.) *He is risen, as he said*; there's our *judgement* informed. (5.) *Come see the place where the Lord lay*; there's our *faith* confirm'd. All you see plain and orderly in the *Text*, both the *Particulars* and the *Sum* of it.

I shall go on orderly with the *Particulars*, and so shew you first the *Persons*, both the speaker, and to whom 'tis spoken. The *Angel* is the speaker, and stands here first. I shall begin with *him*.

And an excellent speaker *he* is. The tongues of *Angels* above all the tongues in the world besides. You will say so anon, when you have heard his speech examin'd. In the mean time a word of *Him*.

St. *Matthew* mentions here but one. St. *Mark* no more. St. *Luke* two. St. *Matthew's* *Angel* sate upon the stone which was rolled away from the mouth of the *Sepulchre*, ver. 2. St. *Mark's* sate on the right side of the *Sepulchre* within, Chap. xvi. ver. 5. St. *Luke's* *Angels* stood by the women as they stood perplexed in the *Sepulchre*, St. *Luke's* xxiv. 4. And St. *John* speaks of two *Angels* more, the one sitting at the head, the other at the feet where the body of *Jesus* had lain. St. *John* xx. 12. And yet in all these diversities no contradiction. The story runs smoothly thus.

These pious *women* mention'd here come early to the *Sepulchre* to embalm their *Masters Body*; whilst they yet stood without for fear, this *Angel* in the *Text* that sate before the door upon the stone he had rolled away, invites them to come in, where they were no sooner entred, but they saw a second *Angel* sitting, who entertain'd them almost with the same words, and is he remembred by St. *Mark*; when they had a while perus'd the bowels of the grave, and found nothing there but the desolate linnen in which their *Lords body* had been wrapt, being somewhat perplexed at the business they were comforted by two other *Angels*, which immediately appear'd to resolve their doubts, and sent them to the *Disciples* to tell the news, and are those spoken of by St. *Luke*; whereupon away they hast, only *Mary Magdalen* returns again with St. *Peter* and St. *John*, who having lookt and entred into the grave, away they goe, but she stands still without and weeps, till two other *Angels*, as St. *John* relates, shew forth themselves to stop her tears and divert her moans, and shew her her *Lord* standing at her back.

Thus we need no *Synecdoche's*, no *is-eor-ue-neor's*, no strein'd figures to make

make things agree. But thus you see *Angels* are all *ministring Spirits*, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation, as the *Apostle* tells us, *Heb. i. 14.* They stand by us when we think not of them. They speak to us often when we do not mind them. In the very grave, in our deepest melancholies, in our saddest conditions; at the head and at the feet of them they take their places and sit to comfort us. But especially when we descend into the grave to seek our Lord, when we cannot be satisfied unless we may even die with him, when we are crucified and dead to the whole world but him; when our only business is both in life and death to be with him, then to be sure we shall not want *Angels* to attend us; at every turn they stand ready for us, upon all occasions they are still at hand. A strong consolation, this, in all afflictions. A brave encouragement (2.) in all good undertakings. A good Item (3.) too for our good behaviour, to carry our selves well, soberly, modestly, piously in all conditions, because of the *Angels* as the *Apostle* speaks, *1 Cor. xi. 10.* that thus stand about us, that are every where so near us.

So near us, that they often answer our desires ere we can speak them. We read not of a word the *Women* said to the *Angel*, yet says the *Text*, He answer'd. Thus, many times God answers us by himself, or by his *Angels* ere we utter our necessities, or breath out our thoughts. He does not always delay his mercy till we beg it, he prevents us with his loving kindness, *Psal. ciii.*

He did so (to be sure) to day by sending it by such Messengers. *Angels* have wings (so they were grav'd and painted in the *Tabernacle* and the *Temple*,) His comforts had so too, to day. The message of the *Resurrection*, the greatest of our comforts could not upon this account come by a better hand. By an *Angel* then (1.) that it might be with the greater speed.

By an *Angel* (2.) that it might be with the greater honour. *Angels* are glorious things, honourable Embassadors; and such are not sent on petty errands; nor can that embassie be slight, on which such persons come.

By an *Angel* (3.) that the benefit might look with more convenience. It was an *Angel* that shut the Gates of *Paradise* against us, and drove us thence into the Territories of the grave; the more convenient sure that the *Angel* again should roll away the stone, and open the gates of *Heaven* out of those confines of death into which he drave us. He had (2.) been employ'd in the news of our *Lords Incarnation* and first birth out of the womb; the fitter to be sent with the tidings of his *Resurrection* and second birth out of the grave.

By an *Angel* (4.) that it might be told with all the advantage it could possibly. Such news is fittest for *Angels* tongues; men know not how, worthily enough to speak it. Thus for the greater speed, and so our greater comfort; for the greater honour, (2.) and so our greater and humbler thanks; for the greater convenience; (3.) and so the greater confirmation of the *Analogie* of our faith; for the greater advantage, (4.) and so our greater and readier acceptance of it, was this first news of the *Resurrection* given us by an *Angel*, though nor men, nor *Angels* sufficiently fit for it.

Angels certainly the fittest of the two, they the fittest for the news, and yet methinks meaner Embassadors might be fitter for the Persons to whom 'tis told. *Angels* and *Women*, the Sons of God and the Daughters

of men are no good matches ; though I must tell you too, such women as these, such who out-run the *Apostles* themselves in affection and duty to their Lord, whose love triumphs over the power of death, whose early piety prevents the morning watch and shames the Sun, are company for *Angels* to make up their *Chaires*.

But it is not without reason that the *Angel* first appears to women, that they are honour'd here with the first news of a *Resurrection*. There's a mystery in it. The woman was first deceiv'd by an *Angel* of darkness, 'twas therefore most convenient she should first be undeceived by an *Angel* of light. The woman (2.) was the first that fell, somewhat the more requisite that she should hear first of the hopes to rise again. Thus does the *Almighty Wisdom* proportion all things to us: Thus does the *Eternal Goodness* contrive all things for us with order and convenience, & respondent ultima primis, and all things answer one another first and last.

Yet all must not look for *Angels* to comfort or instruct them. St. Peter and St. John came to the *Sepulchre*, but found no such favour, they came too late; the *Angels* were gone before they came. The women had been before them and had gotten the blessing. 'Tis they that watch and rise up early to find their Lord, that meet *Angels* at their Prayers. When the day breaks the *Angel* must be gone, Gen. xxxii. 26. to say his Mattens, says the *Chaldee*, He'l stay no longer. When we come lagging in with our devotions, God's answers come lagging too: extraordinary favours are the rewards only of extraordinary attendance. X

But what? those two great *Apostles* not so highly favour'd as poor silly women? What's *Mary Magdalene* the sinner too among the rest, prefer'd above them? 'Tis so, Women, and sinners, and any above us, above the greatest *Apostles*, the greatest Clerks in Gods favour, if above them in their devotion and and piety to their Lord; 'Tis so, and we must be content; nay, if God please, to prefer the weak and meaner things of the world, upon any account, either such as are so, or such as we conceive so, at any time before us, we have no more to say, but even so it pleased thee O Father; and learn upon it to be humble, and not think too highly of our selves; As those weaker things are hereupon also not to be afraid, or terrified at their weaknesses, but called to here by the *Angel* not to fear. Fear not ye: Which is the *Proem* or first Part of his speech, to which we are now come.

Four things here there were, that possibly they might fear, (1.) The glorious presence of the *Angel*; (2.) The ghastly countenances of the *Souldiers*, (3.) The unsetled face of the yet almost quaking Earth, (4.) and the sad sight and horror of the grave. Yet fear not says the *Angel*, not any of these.

Not me, not an *Angel* first. *Angels* are our fellow-servants, and of our brethren that bear the testimony of Jesus as well as we, Rev. xix. 10. We need not fear them, they'l do us no hurt; nay, they are always ready to do us good. Somewhat I confess there is in it, that makes them commonly thus Preface all their speeches, as Fear not Zacharias, St. Luke i. 13. and ver. 30. Fear not Mary, and fear not to the Shepherds, St. Luke ii. 10. All is not so well between Heaven and us as should be, all not so wholly well but that we may be afraid sometimes of a messenger from thence. Yet fear not for all that, they come not to us thence but with good tidings, especially when they come in raiment, white garments, as the *Angel* does, ver. 3. or a long white garment, as St. Marks *Angel*, Chap. xvi. 5. That's neither a fashion nor a colour to be afraid of,

of, for any that seek *Jesus which was crucified*, or hope to see the face and enjoy the company of Holy *Angels*; though some now a days are much fear'd with such a garment, when the *Angels* or Messengers of the *Churches* appear in it. But *un'förschide*, Fear it not, 'Tis but an innocent *Robe*, no more hurt in it than in the *Angels* that wore it. 'Tis the *Robe of Innocence*, and the *Resurrection*; No reason to fear it. Fear not ye, not this bright appearance.

No nor (2.) that black one neither, of the ghastly countenances of the amazed *Souldiers*. They alas are run and gone. There was no looking for them upon him they had crucified. They indeed had reason to be afraid, that the *earth* that trembled under them should gape and swallow them, that the *grave* they kept, being now miraculously opened might presently devour them: that he whom they had crucified now coming forth with power and splendour, might send them down immediately into eternal darkness for their villany. Nay the very innocent brightness and whites in which the *Angel* then appear'd, might easily strike into them a sad reflection and terror of their own guilt, and confound them with it. (and I am afraid when the *Angels* long white Garment does so still, 'tis to such guilty Souls and Consciences as these *Souldiers* that it does so; such who either betrayed their *Lord* to death, or were set to keep him there.) Such I confess may fear even the Garments of Innocence that others wear. But they that seek *Christ crucified*, may be as bold as Lions. *Non timent Mauri jacula nec arcus, nec venenatis gravidas sagittis Christe pharetras.* Thy *Disciples* O B. *Jesus*, now thou art risen, will fear nothing, nor Darts, nor Spears, nor Bows, nor Arrows, nor any force, or terror, any face or power of man whatever. And ye good innocent souls, ye good *women*, fear not ye, your own innocence will guard you, these *Souldiers* shall do you no hurt, their shaking hands cannot wield their weapons, nor dare they stand by it, they are running away with all speed to save themselves. So (2.) Fear not them.

Nor fear (3.) the quaking *earth*, that seems ready either to sink them, or sinks under them; 'tis now even settling upon its foundation. The *Lord* of the whole earth has now once again set his foot upon it, and it is quiet, and the meek, such as seek *Christ*, they shall now inherit it. But though the *earth* were mov'd, and though the hills were carried into the midst of the Sea, yet God is our hope, the *Lord* is our strength, and we will not, therefore, fear, says David, Psal. xlv. 1, 2. No, though the waters thereof rage and swell, and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same, do earth what it can to fright us, God is a present help in trouble, Why then should ye be afraid? Fear not.

No not, lastly, the very *grave* it self, that King of Terrors, That is now no longer so, to you. Though Tyrants should now tear your bodies into a thousand pieces, grind your bones to powder, scatter your ashes in the air, and disperse your dissolved *atomes* through all the winds, no matter; this *Angel* and his company are set to wait upon your dust, and will one day come again and gather it together into Heaven. Nothing can keep us thence, nothing separate us, nor life, nor death, says the *Apostle*, Rom. viii. 38. Fear nothing then at all: Not ye, however; For ye seek *Jesus which was crucified*; that's an irrefragable argument why you should not fear. And such, give me leave to make it, before I handle it, as an encouragement of our endeavours; an encouragement (1.) against our fears, before I consider it as an encouragement to our work.

And

And indeed, Ye who dare *seek Jesus that was crucified*, amidst Swords, and Spears, and Graves, of what can you be afraid? He that dreads not death needs fear nothing; He that flights the torments of the Cross, and despises the shame of it. He that loves his Lord better than his life, that dares own a crucified Saviour, and a profession that is like to produce him nothing but scorn, and danger, and ruine, He cannot fear; *Illum si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruina*; The world it self, though it should fall upon him, cannot astonish him. Nothing so undaunted as a good Christian, as he that truly seeks *Jesus that was crucified*.

And there's good reason for it. He that does so is about a work that will justify it self; He needs not fear *that*. He whom he seeks is *Jesus*, one who came to save him from his sins; he needs not fear *them*. This *Jesus* being crucified has by his dying conquer'd death; O death where is thy sting? He needs not fear *that*. And though die we must, yet the Grave will not always hold us, no more than it did him. He is not here, nor shall we be always here, not always lie in dust and darkness, no need to fear *that*. Nay, *he is risen* again, and we by that so far from fear that we know we shall one day rise also. For the Chambers of Death, ever since the time that Christ lay in them, lie open for a return, are but places of retreat from noise and trouble, places for the Pilgrims of the earth to visit, only to see *where the Lord lay*. Thus is every *Comma* in the *Text* an Argument against all fears that shall at any time stop our course in seeking *Jesus that was crucified*. And having thus out of the words vanquish't your fears, I am now next to encourage your endeavours: *For I know ye seek Jesus*, &c.

I know it, says the *Angel*: That is, I would not only not have you be afraid of what you are about, as if you were doing ill, but I commend you for it, for 'tis well that you *seek Jesus which was crucified*, you need not be afraid, you do well to do it.

Yea, but how dost thou know it, Thou fair Son of light that *they seek him*? Alas! 'tis easie to be known by men and womens outward deportment whom they seek. Let us but examine how these *women* sought, and we shall see.

1. They come here to his *Sepulchre*; they not only follow'd him to his grave a day or two ago, (the common office we pay to a departed friend) but to *day* they come again to renew their duties, and repeat their tears. Nor do they do it slightly or of course.

They (2.) do it *early, very early*, St. *Mar. xvi. 2.* as if they were not, could not be well till they had done it; So early, that it was scarce light, nay, *while it was yet dark*, says St. *John*; they thought they could not be too soon with *him* they loved.

They (3.) came on with courage as well as haste. They knew there was a guard upon the *Sepulchre*, ver. 66. of the former *Chapter*, yet for all that venture they would, they feared them not. The *day* they knew, too, would come on apace, and there would be eyes upon them, so may be presumed not to be ashamed of their *Master*, or their work. No, nor were they neither afraid (4.) of cost or charges, for

They had bought rich Spices, and sweet ointments, and had brought them with them to anoint him, St. *Mar. xvi. 1.* They were resolved to be at charges with him.

That (5.) would not be done without solemnity, and ceremony neither; *that* they were resolved on too; resolved to pay their last duty to their Lord with all funeral solemnities and honours.

And

And by this time we have more than a guess when men seek *Jesus that was crucified*. (1.) If they follow him day after day. (2.) If their devotions be so eager on him, that they give him their attendance at the earliest hours, *suffer not their eyes to sleep, nor their eye-lids to slumber, nor the temples of their head to take any rest till they have found him.* (3.) If neither the fear or shame of men can keep them from Him. (4.) If the Grave it self be more their desire than their fear, willing to be dissolved to be with him. (5.) If shame for his name be (as it was to the Apostles) the matter of their rejoicing. (6.) If for his sake they spare no cost upon his Altars which represent his Tombe, and present his body, nor upon the poor who are the members of his body. (7.) If they think much of no cost, pains, or time; no duty or reverence too much for him; when we find any thus disposed and doing, we may confidently say of them, *They seek Jesus that was crucified*, and we thus know it of a certain.

And indeed we had need of good certain signs to know it by. For many there are that cry *Lord, Lord*, and yet *Christ* himself does not know them he professes; Many that talk of the *Lord Jesus*, and pretend to cast out devils too sometimes, and do miracles in his name, have his name the *Lord Jesus* commonly in their mouths, and talk of it at every turn, yet if you mark it, 'tis one *King Jesus*; if any *Jesus*; 'tis in his Kingdom, not on his *Cross*; not *Jesus crucified*. No, the Doctrine of the *Cross* was to the Jew a scandal, and to these men foolishness. The very sign of the *Cross* disturbs them. Fools they were thought (you know) a while ago that would take up the *Cross* and follow him, when they might with more ease follow him in his Kingdom, (as was then much talk of when the Kingdom was in their own hands) and reign with him. But whatever was the business of those times, the business of this is, *Jesus crucified*. And if we had no other proof that they still seek not *Jesus which was crucified*, but that they are yet ashamed to give any reverence to his name, so to acknowledge him; ashamed too of the very badge of *Jesus crucified*, the sign of the *Cross* upon which he was; not only ashamed of it neither, but not ashamed to oppose it, and write and preach against it, and disturb the peace of the Church and simple souls about it; if, I say, we had no other Argument against them that they seek not *Jesus which was crucified*, I know not how they would invalidate and less answer it. He certainly that cannot endure the sign would less endure the thing it self, nor seek him certainly that hung upon it, if he must succeed him there.

Nay, we our selves who profess right enough, live not, I am afraid, sometimes, as if we sought or served a crucified *Jesus*, or indeed a *Jesus*. Our devotions to him are dull and heavy, slow and careless; we come to Church as if we cared not whether we came or no; we are niggardly and sparing in the embalming of *Christ's Body*; to the Church, and to the poor; we are afraid of pains and charges in his service; we are ashamed too often to be found doing well, lest the Wits and Gallants of the Age should laugh at us; afraid to be too ceremonious lest we give offence to I know not whom; ashamed of patience or humility lest we should be thought poor spirited Christians, that is, the servants of so poor spirited a Lord, that would rather suffer himself to be so horribly abused and crucified than to head his fathers Legions to fight for him.

He that sees how we have kept our *Lent*, how we always keep it; how little we mortifie our lusts, how little we restrain our passions, how

much we indulge our appetites, how far we are from crucifying our sins, or subduing our flesh, or dying to the world; how profuse men and women are in their apparel, how studious of vanities, how pour'd out in riots and excesses, how given up to their sports and pleasures, how continually taken up in some or other of these when they are even walking to their Tombs, and should be thinking upon their Graves; how every day they still post off all serious and religious thoughts and never think of *Christ* or of his *Cross*, either what he did, or what he suffered for them, or what he would have us to do upon it; He cannot but say, I know ye seek *not Jesus that was crucified*. I see no Balms in your hand, no Spices in your laps, no tears in your eyes, no sorrow in your faces, no funerals by your garments, no solemnness or seriousness at all in any of your demeanour, that carries any semblance of relation to *Jesus crucified*; All so loose, so fine, so quite of another fashion, that certainly it were a tyranny over my faith, to impose upon me to believe that you seek any such as a *Jesus that was crucified*, that any such as you do so at all.

I did not think to have made so severe an observation, but that I find men think commonly that strict devotion is but womens work, they themselves may live with greater freedom, but so it is not; 'tis only this seeking *Jesus* we have spoke of can really arm us against the *Grave*, or fit us for the *Resurrection*. And great persons do so too; too often think 'tis for those only of lesser rank, the simpler and the mean ones: *they*, forsooth, have enough to do to dress, and visit, and talk idly, and take a liberty from morn to night answerable to their greatness, their fortune, or their youth; This story of *Jesus crucified* spoils all the sport, and lays all their honour too soon in the dust. Well, notwithstanding we had better all of us have the *Angel* here than *they* commend us, *his* testimony rather than we seek *Jesus that was crucified*, than *their* wits that make light of it.

III. And yet methinks they here are but slenderly rewarded for it, for all their pains. Now they have done all, *He is not here*. That we call'd the correction of their search.

And however we think of it, 'tis a good reward, to have an *Angel* set to keep us right, to tell us when we do amiss. Let *me* never want one, O *Lord*, to do so; *Let him smite me friendly, and reprove me*. There are even Balms, says the *Psalmist*, that will break ones head, *Psal. clxi. 6.* and smooth ways we often stumble in; smoothing and anointing does not always cure us; too often betray us. To tell us always, O Sir, you are right, you do well, excellently well, is but a way to ruine us. *Thou art the man* is better far; you are out, *He is not here*; you seek wrong, when we do so, as necessary, as to tell us, we seek right, when so we do. Indeed, the *women* were right both for him they sought, and the way they sought him; but for the place, *that* they were amiss in. Even in many things we offend all, says St. *James*, *Jam. iii. 2.* For *there is no man that sinneth not*, 2 *Chron. vi. 36.* And 'tis our happiness when we are timely told it, that we go not wrong too long.

And it was timely here indeed. The *Angel* would not have them enter in an error. It was a good work they came about, but he would not let them do it upon false Principles. Men do so often, do that which is good upon a wrong ground; seek *Christ* too often so.

Sometimes (1.) they seek him in the *Grave*, that is, in fading dying things, in earthly comforts, or for such things. But he is not there.

Sometimes

Sometimes (2.) they seek him in the Graves of sins and lusts, whilst they yet continue in them ; whilst they are yet in their Rebellions, Schisms, Pride, Covetousness, Malice, Envy, and Disorder, they pretend to seek him, even none but him ; but his body fell not, as those *Israelites*, in the graves of lust. He is not there.

Sometimes (3.) they seek him in a melancholy fit, in a humour sad as the grave, in a mood of discontent, all godly on a sudden ; they have buried a Friend, or Son, or Wife, or Brother, are disappointed of a Preferment, have miss'd of an Estate, lost an Expectation, and are now forsooth for a fit of heaven, a seeking *Christ*, but, *He is not here* ; you'll see it quickly if the day clear up again ; the Monk will quit his Cell, the Dog will to his Vomit, he's presently where he was.

Sometimes (4.) they seek him in outward Elements, in meer Ceremonies and Formalities, and mind no further ; think if we hear a Sermon, or come to Prayers, make a Formal shew of Piety and Religion, all's well ; But if we bring not somewhat also within, some hearty inward devotion with us too, *He is not here* neither ; A few linnen Cloths you may find perhaps that look fair and handsom, and the External Lineaments of a sad sober Piety, like the dimensions of the Grave ; but dead mens cloths they are ; and a Grave, an empty Grave it is still ; if our hearts be taken up with them, stopt and buried there, *He is not here*.

Sometimes (5.) we seek him perfectly in a wrong place, where the malice of his enemies only thrust him for a time amidst dust and rubbish, He is not there ; He will be sought in the beauty of holiness ; now he is risen, there shall you find him : for he does not love to dwell in dust, though amongst us that are so. We must find him a fitter place to be in ; Now he is risen, and we are risen, our low condition chang'd into a higher, our Poverties into Plenties, our Rags into Robes, our Houses almost into Courts ; 'Tis fit his House and Courts should also rise into lustre and glory, and he not be in Badgers skins whilst we dwell in Cedars, nor lie upon the cold stones or earth, whilst we lie upon Silks and Velvets.

And now you see why it is when we seek *Christ* we so often miss him. We seek him where he is not to be found, amidst Graves and Sepulchres, whilst we are dead in trespasses and sins ; or buried over head and ears in earth and earthly interests ; or only in some sad distemper, when we are so weary of our selves that we wish for death ; or only in dead Elements and Rites without the life or spirit of devotion ; or with that slowness and neglect as if we thought any thing good enough for him, or that he would be content with any clod of earth to lay his head on.

But these are the *Mysteries* of the Grave. He was not to be found, lastly, even in the Grave, without a *Mystery*. He could not be held in the Grave they laid him. *It was not possible*, says St. Peter, *Acts* ii. 24. God had promised he would not leave him there, *Psal.* xvi. that his flesh should see no corruption. Here was the mistake these good women made ; they either understood not, or had forgot this promise ; and believed not his own, that he would rise again. This is that St. Luke's Angels even chide them for, for forgetting : *why seek you, say they, the living among the dead ? Remember what he spake to you while he was yet in Galilee, saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again*, St. Luke xxiv. 5, 6, 7. It was a piece of infidelity, it seems, now

to seek him in the *Grave*, so that well may the *Angels* ask them why they do it.

Indeed, our *Angel* here is not so rough: But you must know this was the first time of their error. When they had been told it once or twice before, first, by *St. Matthews Angel*, and then *St. Marks*, that he was not there, 'twould make even an *Angel* chide to see them still continue in the same mistake. At the first 'tis *Angels* method to be smooth in the business of reproof.

Nay, and some times to pave our way to it, with a *Fear not*, I do not mean to hurt you, what I am to tell you is only for your good. This is but with *Balaams Angel* to stand only in our way with a Sword drawn to hinder us from a fruitless journey, or at the worst but to smite us friendly with it, that we may go no further on upon wrong surmises.

And yet *Fear not, He is not here!* is not the Inference ill? Are they well joyn'd? Why, *he is not here*, and therefore *fear* seems a better consequence. If he be not here we have lost all our labour, all our cost. If he be not here, some body has stoln him hence, and taken away even that little comfort that was left us of seeing him once again, and doing our last office to him. Thus *Mary Magdalen* complains indeed, *St. Joh. xx. 13.* Well, but for all that, depose your fears, if you should find him here you might fear indeed, and despair for ever. He had deluded you, he had broken his promise with you, that he would come again; he was *no* Saviour, but his body a meer dead trunk like other mens; your hopes were all taken away, and all of you undone for ever. But now he is not here you may hope better, and dread no longer, and I shall quickly put you out of all fear indeed, for I shall tell you now, *He is risen*, as he said.

IV. And now indeed, *O blessed Angel*, thou saist something: Away all my fears, *He is risen!*

Why then (1.) He is above the malice of his enemies, and of all that hate him. *They*, and the Souldiers that crucified him, may be dismaid, and look all like dead men for fear, but I shall never be dismaid hereafter, seeing death has no more dominion over him.

For (2.) if he be risen we shall rise one day too. If our head be risen, the body ere long will rise also. He is *the first fruits*, *1 Cor. xv.* the whole lump of course will follow after. So certain, that the *Apostle* tells us, that in him we are all already made alive, *ver. 22.* and with indignation asks how some among them durst be so bold to say there was *no resurrection of the dead*, seeing *Christ is risen*, *ver. 12.*

But is he not rather *raised* than risen (3.) that they durst say so? Was it by his own power or anothers? By his own sure; for all the *Evangelists* say unanimously *he is risen*. Indeed, 'tis said, *Acts iv. 10.* that God rais'd him from the dead. It was so; for he was God himself, he and his Father one, *St. Joh. x. 30.* so God rais'd him, and yet he rais'd himself; was not rais'd as the *Widows Son*, or *Jairus Daughter*, or his Friend *Lazarus*, but so as none other ever were or shall be rais'd and risen, and yet so risen as not rais'd by any but himself, that's a third note upon *He is risen*.

And (4.) risen so as to die no more. All *they* did, but he not. He convers'd a while with his Disciples upon earth, so by degrees to raise *them* too; but after forty days he ascended into heaven. Risen surely to purpose, risen above all heavens, risen into glory.

And

And if thus risen, we have good cause, (1.) to raise our thoughts up after him, entertain higher thoughts of him than before; though then we knew him after the flesh, yet now with the *Apostle* henceforth to know him so no more.

Good cause, (2.) If He be risen, to raise up our affections after him; set our affections, as the *Apostle* infers it, upon things above, *Col. iii. 1, 2.* and no longer upon things beneath; set them wholly upon him.

Nay, and (3.) Raise our *selves* upon him, build all our thoughts and hopes upon him; build no longer upon Sand and Earth, but upon that *Rock* that is now risen higher than we, in whom we need fear no storms or tempests; we cannot miscarry.

And in the mean time, lastly, Now *he is risen*, let us rise and meet him; rise in hast with *Mary*, yet not to go to the *grave* to weep, (as they thought of her) but to cast our selves at his feet, and cry, *Lord, If thou hadst been here*, if I had found thee in the *grave*, my brother and I, and all my brethren had died indeed, been irrecoverably ruin'd and undone. And yet for all that, *Come now and see where the Lord lay*. Be your own eyes your witnesses that *He is risen*.

And 'tis but just, that in so doubtful a condition of affairs, and a change so unheard of, you should seek an evidence not to be contradicted. *Come then and see it. The place will shew it, and your eyes shall behold it.*

Indeed, that *he is risen*, as he said, to a tittle, to a day, as soon as ever it could be imagined day, is an argument, that *not being here, he is truly risen*. Yet 'tis fit that we should be certain he is not there.

For 'tis fit that we should be able to give a reason of the faith that is in us, says *St. Peter*. We can neither believe unreasonable things our selves, nor imagine others should believe them. We are not to take our Religion upon trust from an *Angel*. *Si Angelus de Cælo*, says *St. Paul*. Not from an *Angel* coming from Heaven it self. Some *Angel* it seems thence may (speaking to an absolute possibility) preach some other doctrine than what we have received, but believe him not, says the *Apostle* if he do, *Gal. i. 8*. But suppose an *Angel* thence can speak no other, yet there is an *Angel* that is from below, from the pit of darkness, that can transform himself into an *Angel of light*. We had therefore need take heed to our own eyes too, as well as to our ears. The best way to fix them is to look first into the *grave* of *Jesus that was crucified*, see what we can find there to make good what the *Angel* tells us, be he who he will. *Try the spirits*, says *St. Joh. i. 4, 1.* whether they be of God, before we trust them. See whether things are as they are presented. 'Tis but dark day yet, we may be deceived if we look not narrowly into the business, even to the very inmost corners and crannies of the *grave*. *Come see then what is there.*

Nothing but the *linnen cloths* that wrapt him in, says *S. Joh. xx. 6, 7.* and *two Angels*, says *St. Luke xxiv. 4.* Well; this was enough indeed to prove he was not there. But how proves it that he was risen? had not some body stoln him thence? The *grave* was clos'd, the *stone* was seal'd, the guard was set, and who durst come to do it? His *Disciples*? why, they were stoln away themselves for very fear. And it is not probable they would venture for him through a guard of *Souldiers* when he was dead, that ran from him when he was alive. The *Jews*? Why, they set a watch to keep him there. The *Souldiers*? why, who should hire them? or, Why should they take money to deny it, if they were hired

to it? Besides, it was against the *Jews* interests, to give so fair a ground to the report of his *Resurrection*, and his *Disciples* had so little subtilty to maintain so forlorn an interest as theirs, that it looks not like a piece of their contrivance; and so poor a purse, God knows they had, that they could not see so largely as to reach it. Nay, and the *linnen cloths* left all behind are a kind of witnesses against it. 'Tis not probable they would have stoln the dead body and left *them* when they came to steal; and the laying them so in order by themselves, requires more leisure than a thieves hast. So being clearly gone, and clearly none to own the theft, and none to prove it, and nothing to evince it, 'tis plain, he must be risen, as he said. We have now, then, no more to do, then *see the place where, &c.*

And *where he lay*, we call the *grave*: A good place sometimes to go into: the house of mourning better to go into than the house of mirth, says *Solomon*, who had tried both: best to recal our wandring thoughts to prepare both for a comfortable death and joyful *Resurrection*.

But *Christs grave* (2.) or *Sepulchre* has more in it than any else. There sit *Angels* to instruct and comfort us; there lie cloths to bind up our wounds, there lies a *napkin* to wrap up our aking heads; there is the fine linnen of the *Saints* to make us bright white garments for the *Resurrection*.

You may now descend into the *grave* with confidence it will not hurt you; *Christs body* lying in it has taken away the stench, and filth and horreur of it. 'Tis but an easie quiet bed to sleep on *now*; and they that die in *Christ* do but *sleep in him*, says *St. Paul*, 1 Thes. ix. 14. and *rest there from their labours*, says *St. John*, Revel. xiv. 13.

Come then and *see the place*, and take the dimensions of your own graves thence. Learn there how to lie down in death, and learn there also how to rise again, to die with *Christ* and to rise with him. 'Tis the principal *Moral* of the *Text*, and the whole business of the *day*. In other words, to die to sin, and live to righteousness, that when we must lie down our selves, we may lie down in peace and rise in glory.

I have thus run through all the Parts of the *Text*. And now I hope, I may say with the *Angel*, *I know ye also seek Jesus that was crucified*, and are come hither to that purpose. But I must not say with the *Angel*, *He is not here*. He is here in his *word*, Here in his *Sacraments*, Here in his poor *members*. Ye see him go before you, when ye see those poor *ghosts* walk; you hear him, when you hear his *word*, or read, or preacht. You even feel him in the blessed *Sacraments* when you receive them worthily. The eyes, and ears, and hands of your bodies do not, cannot; but your souls may find see and him in them all.

Some of you, I know, are come hither even to seek his *body too*, to pour out your souls upon it, and at yon holy *Sepulchre* revive the remembrance of the crucified *Jesus*; yet take heed you there seek him as you ought. Not *the living among the dead*, I hope. Not the dead *elements* only, or them, so as if they were corporally himself. No; *He is risen and gone* quite off the earth as to his corporal presence: All now is spirit, though *Spirit and Truth* too, truly there, though not corporally. *He is risen*, and our thoughts must rise up after him; and think higher of him now than so, and yet beleive truly he is there. So that I may speak the last words of the *Text* with greater advantage than they are here; *Come see the place where the Lord lies*.

And come *see the place*, too, *where he lay*; go into the *grave*, though not seek him there. Go into the *grave* and weep there, that our sins *they* were

were that brought *him* thither. Go into the *grave* and die there ; die with him that died for us ; breath out your souls in love for him, who out of love died so for us. Go into his *grave* and bury all our sins and vanities in that holy dust. Go we into the *grave* and dwell there for ever rather than come out and sin again, and be content (if he see it fit) to lie down there for him, who there lay down for us. Fill your daily meditations (but now especially) with his death and passion, his agony and bloody sweat, his stripes and wounds, and griefs and pains.

But dwell not always among the Tombes. You come to seek him ; seek him then (1.) *where* you may find him ; and that is, says the *Apostle*, at the right hand of God. He is risen and gone thither. And seek him (2.) *so* as you may be sure find him. Not to run out of the story, seek him as these pious *women* did ; (1.) Get early up about it hence forward, *watch and pray* a little better ; he that seeks him early shall be sure to find him. Seek him (2.) *courageously*, be not afraid of a guard of *souldiers*, be not frightened at a *grave*, nor fear though the *earth* it self shake and totter under you : Go on with courage, do your work, be not afraid of a *crucified Lord*, nor of any office, not to be crucified for his service. Seek him (3.) with your holy *balms and spices*, the sweet odours of holy purposes, and the perfume of strong Resolutions, the bitter Aloes of Repentance, the Myrrhe of a patient and constant Faith, the Oil of Charity, the spicie perfumes of Prayers and Praises ; bring not so much as the scent of earth, or of an unrepented sin about you ; seek him so as men may know you seek him, know by your eyes, and know by your hands, and know by your knees and feet, and all your postures and demeanors, that you seek *Jesus that was crucified* ; let there be nothing vain or light, or loose about you ; nothing but what becomes his Faith and Religion whom you seek, nothing but what will adorn the *Gospel of Christ*. You that thus seek *Jesus which was crucified*, shall not want an *Angel* at every turn to meet you, to stand by, support and comfort you in all your fears and sorrows, nor to encourage your endeavours, nor to assist you in your good works, nor to preserve you from errors, nor to inform you in truths, nor to advance your hopes, nor to confirm your faiths, nor to do any thing you would desire : You shall be sure to find him too whom your souls seek ; and He who this day rose from his own *Sepulchre*, shall also raise up you from the death of sin first to the *life of righteousness*, and from the *life of righteousness* one day to the *life of glory* ; when the *Angel* shall no longer guide us into the *grave*, but out of it, out of our Graves and Sepulchres into Heaven, where we shall meet whole *Choirs of Angels* to welcome and conduct us into the place where the *Lord* is ; where we shall behold even with the eyes of our bodies *Jesus that was crucified* sitting at the *right hand of God*, and sit down there with him together in the glory of the Father.

To which He bring us, who this day rose again to raise us thither, *Jesus which was crucified* : To whom though crucified, to whom for that he was crucified, and this day rose again to lift us up out of the graves of sins and miseries and griefs, be all honour and power, praise and glory both by *Angels* and Men, this day, henceforward and for ever. *Amen.*

THE FIFTH SERMON UPON Easter Day.

I COR. XV. 19.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.



And if this *Day* had not been, we had been so *Miserable* indeed, and without *hope* of being other. If *Christ* had not risen there had been no Resurrection, and if no Resurrection, no hope but here; then most miserable we *Christians* to be sure; who were sure to find nothing but hard usage here, *tribulation in this world*, and could expect no other, or no better there.

Happy then this *Day* to us. Happy we that this *Day* came, which opens to us a door of *hope*, have reason therefore to remember it, and with joy to keep it, as the first dawning of a better hope, the *day-spring* of all our happiness. This *Day* our *Head* is risen, and with him our *hope* has enlarg'd its borders, and made a prospect into the other World, sees some comfort there for our sorrows here. This *Days* bright-shining beams have lightned our eyes, that now we shall not sleep in death; a *Sun-day* indeed, the first true *Sunday* that ever shone, wherein the *Sun of righteousness* arose out of the Chambers of the Grave, to guide our feet out of misty darkness into marvellous light, out of the paths of the dead into the land of the living, out of this miserable into a blessed life by *Christ's* Resurrection.

I know the *Apostle* gathers his Argument somewhat otherwise: *If there be no Resurrection*, says He, *then is Christ not risen*. If *Christ* had not, be not risen, say We, there is not; will not be a Resurrection. To the same purpose both he and we, both of us making *Christ's* rising the cause, the ground of ours. If He, then We; if not He, not We neither. Our grounds the same.

And the inferences the same too. For whether we say, If there be no Resurrection *Christ* is not risen; or, if *Christ* be not risen there is no Resurrection, we affirm both, *Christ's* rising and our own. And if either be false, we are found false witnesses, both, nay all. Not St. Paul only, who
saw

saw him last, but those also that saw him first, but *Cephas* also and the Twelve, but five hundred brethren at a clap, who saw him all at once. *St. James* too, and all the *Apostles*, who both eat and drank with him after his Resurrection, who bare witness of it, and preacht it to the World, preacht our Resurrection from it. *False witnesses*, liars all, all the *Fathers*, all the Preachers ever since, who preacht nothing so much as both the one and the other. So if either be false, our preaching is vain, (but that perhaps is little in the worlds account, who could peradventure willingly spare both Preachers, and Preaching too) nay, but *your faith* is also vain, your hope is vain, *you are yet in your sins*, and when you die, you perish, and miserable you are both alive and dead. Miserable deceivers, We, to preach; Miserably deceived, You, to trust a Saviour who could not save himself, but is dead and perished. Miserable both You and We to continue in a Religion so groundless, so unprofitable, so troublesome, so uncomfortable, so hopeless, whence little good is to be expected here and less hereafter, as it must needs be, if there be no other hope in *Christ*, but only here.

But the comfort is the *Text* is but a Supposition, What would become of us, if our hope were only here. Now a meer Supposition, as it infers a necessary consequence upon the supposal: So being but a meer Supposition, it as evidently proves a real truth contrary to the Supposal. *If in this life only we have hope* supposes, that so it is not truly, though, truly, so it might be. And we were most miserable, says in effect, that so we are not, though upon the supposal so it would be.

So that by this we have two general parts to handle in the *Text*, (1.) What our *Hope* might be, and what then might be the Issue. It might be *only in this life*, (such hopes there are) and then the Issue would be Misery. Then (2.) what our *Hope* is, and what therefore the success. It is not in this life, therefore in the other; or not in this life only, then in both, a double *Hope*, a lasting, and everlasting *Hope*. And then the Effect sure will be good, if the other end in misery, happiness must be the close of this. The first of these is true only upon Supposal, the second true without it. The first the *Apostle* only supposes, to prove the absurdity of denying a Resurrection, or our *hope* in *Christ* concerning it. The second he truly means; That the *Christians hope* in *Christ* is not only here, and he is therefore the most happy of the world, because it is not, though if it were, he of all were the most desperately miserable.

The sum must be to teach us, (1.) Where not to place our *Hope*; And (2.) where to place it; (3.) What is the Effect of an ill placed hope; And (4.) what of that which is rightly set. By both, shewing us even the necessity of a Resurrection, and of a faithful expectation of it.

And two Kinds of *Hope*, now, with their several Effects shall divide the *Text*, a False one, and a True one.

I. A False *Hope*. In *Christ* in this life only.

And its Effect. Misery, misery, both in this life and in the other. Most miserable, of all men most miserable: then in both lives to be sure.

II. A True *Hope*. Not in this life only.

With its Effect. Happiness, double happiness: here and hereafter both. That, also, not in this life only; for if the other makes its owners the most miserable; this then by the Law of contraries

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makes

makes most happy in this world; as well as in the other. Though there most, because there is most, yet here too, because here is some.

The First, *Hope* and its Effect more plainly exprest: The Second and its Effect as necessarily implied, both of them together, the full Contents of the *Text*.

I shall for once begin with the False *Hope*, because the *Apostles* purpose here seems more especially to be, to beat down that. Which once done, a few words, and a little time will serve for the other; and as the *Apostle* here does but only intimate it, so it shall serve us anon but to touch it, lest we too much transgress the bounds both of *Text* and time.

To search then thoroughly into the vanity and misery of a *Hope* that reaches short of heaven, we shall consider these four Particulars: (1.) That such a *Hope* there is, a false *hope* in *Christ*. That (2.) that which is in him *in this life only* is such a one. That (3.) the Effect of it is misery, all those that have it *miserable*; they that have *hope in Christ in this life only miserable*, they. Yet (4.) of those, some more miserable than others, some *most miserable*. We of all, We *Apostles*, We the Ministers, We the Preachers of it *most miserable* of all, of all the rest. *If in this life only we have hope, We of all, &c.*

I. General.

1. That a false hope in *Christ* there is.

That a False *Hope* there is even in him, who is *the hope of all the ends of the earth*, I would we could not say. But a false belief there is in him, nay, many false ones, therefore a false *hope* too, yea, many such. For all hope presupposes a belief, and such as our belief, such is our hope also.

We could easily, peradventure, bear it, were that hope only false, which is in things below, in things transitory. Why? They deceive themselves, are inconstant to themselves, no wonder then if so to us. Health loses it self when it fails it Master. Riches decrease not more to their owner than to themselves. Pleasure fades at the same time, wherein it leaves the pursuer. Honour becomes but air when it is departed from him it honoured. All earthly hopes only therefore fail us, because their own natures fail them. The things we hope for perish, and we therefore lose them. All this might be endured to be fail'd by failing hopes.

But that a *Hope* in him who cannot fail should fail us, a *hope* in him that cannot deceive should delude us, who could think it? Yet too true it is. Such a *hope*, many such a one there is.. When though the object be right, or at least materially so, even *Christ* our Saviour; yet either (1.) the formality, or way of apprehending him is wrong, or (2.) the ground false, or (3.) the reason none, or (4.) the order ill, or (5.) the managing of it naught, or (6.) the nature of it not right, or (7.) the strength of it not competent, or the continuance too short. We shall best understand what this false hope in *Christ* is, by considering what is required to make up that which is the true one. And to it are required (1.) a right apprehension, (2.) sure grounds, (3.) good reason, (4.) order, (5.) discretion, (6.) purity, (7.) steadfastness and constancy.

What is required to a true hope in *Christ*.

The several kinds of false hope compared with true ones.

1. True *hope* should have a right apprehension of its object, as well as an object that is right. 'Tis not enough to justify our hope that we say it is in *Christ*, unless it be in *Christ* truly apprehended. To conceive *Christ* so to be the Saviour of sinners, as remaining sinners; to imagine he will give us heaven because we imagine it; to expect he should violently draw

draw us thither whether we will or no: to hope that he will save us without doing any thing our selves is presumption at the easiest I can speak it, but some part of it is *Blasphemy*, viz. To make *Christ* so to receive sinners as even to approve the sins, by taking the persons into favour, and justifying them, or declaring them to be just and righteous whilst they wilfully continue in them; and so far from truth it is, as that himself professes he came not to save them otherwise than by calling them to repentance, St. *Mat. ix. 13*. Yet as bad a hope as it is, it is too common Mat. 9. 13. now, commonly profest and preacht too, as well as practised, though most injuriously to *Christ*, and as dangerously to themselves.

2. *Hope*, that is, true *Hope*, should be well grounded, now there is a groundless one, that must needs be nought. The ground of hope is the Word of God. *In thy word do I hope*, says *David*, *Psal. cxix. 81*. And, that in the *Scripture* ye might have hope, says St. *Paul*, *Rom. xv. 4*. That which hath other foundation is without foundation. Gods Word, not mans Comment. *Christs* Promise, not mans Fancy must ground our hope. To hope we shall be saved only because we hope so; To hope God will save us only because he is merciful, infinitely merciful; or that we shall to heaven because we perswade our selves we are Elected and Predestinated, or conceive our selves the only *Saints* and darlings of the most High; To make either our own groundless and sudden hopes, or Gods general mercies only, or temporal successes and prosperities (which are common also to the most wicked) or rash and obscure fancies of Predestination and Election, or our own meerly imagined holiness and Saintship: or, yet, some new revelation or inspiration, or some extraordinary strange light and motion within us, (which may as well proceed from him, who too often changes himself into an Angel of light, as from the *Father of lights*, for ought we know; nay, for we know it does so, if it be contrary to any parcel of Gods revealed will in *Scripture*, that from God it is not, if it be so) upon any of these, I say, nay, upon all of them together (yea, though the Prophets we have chosen to our selves, add their word to it to assert it) to found our hope is to build it upon the sand, that when any storm shall come from heaven, any wind or tempest of Gods displeasure beat upon it, when temptations, afflictions, or persecutions, sickness, or death shall smite the corners of this specious building of our hope, down it falls, and in the dust, there, lies our hope; yea, the fall is great, so much the greater by how much the higher, the larger built. He that will ground his hope aright must not be too sudden. *Qui crediderit ne festinet*, says the *Prophet*. Let him not be too hasty to believe. *He that believeth shall not make haste*. To Gods general goodness and Promises he must add some inward feelings: For his opinion of being Predestinated or Elected he must find some ground from his effectual calling, inward Sanctification and Renovation, constancy of faith and resolution, as well as from Gods goodness and mercy. His holiness and Saintship too he must not measure by his own conceit, but by the square of Gods Commandments; Does he do that which is holy and just? Then a *Saint*, not otherwise in the *Scripture Phrase*. New Revelations beyond the Word of God he must renounce if he mean not to reject the Word of God as insufficient; and his new lights and inspirations he must bring to the light of Gods written Word, his Teachers Doctrines must be tried also by the same evidence and rule, and answer to it too, or his hope will be as groundless as his who never heard of *Christ* or God, only serve to make him miserable. For so he is, and so will be, who thus

fixes not his ground, who has nothing else but those forsaide imaginations to go upon.

1 Pet. 3. 15.

Nay (3.) Reason too is required to our *hope*. *Be ready*, says St. Peter, *always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in you.* 1 Pet. iii. 15. *Hope* without reason is an unreasonable hope, fit for beasts not men; unreasonable to be required of reasonable men. He that requires me to hope contrary to reason, requires of me either an impossibility, or a folly. I cannot truly hope that which is impossible to my reason, that which I really conceive impossible; or I am a fool to go about, desire, or pursue it, whilst I think so. *Hope* above *hope* I must; nay, *hope* against *hope* I may too, sometimes, as *Abraham* is said to have done, *Rom. iv. 18.* that is, against the ordinary course of Nature, or Affairs; but then only, though when greater reason perswades me to hope against it, then to fear with it; when God expressly sends me word, or some other way assures me he will transcend the ordinary way with me, and not bind himself to Laws of inferiour nature and course, and then indeed it is greater reason that I should believe God than rely upon natural reason and ability, or ordinary providence and common course. But then I must have either an Angel from heaven to tell me so, or an evidence from God, which I can neither resist nor deny; a full evidence besides that it is God that so assures me, that he it truly is who requires my belief. Otherwise I am to trust no further than reason will assure me, nor hope more, nor otherwise from Christ or God, then true reason grounded upon Gods holy Word, and possibilities, and probabilities, too, will move me to. To hope other is but to be our own deceivers.

4. True *hope in Christ* should be rightly ordered. First Faith, then *hope*, then rejoycing in *hope*, then assurance, not assurance at the first dash, nor rejoycing neither. *Hope* hath a kind of torment with it at the first, when the thing we hope for is either delay'd, or a great way off. The nearer we draw to it, the lesser is our torment, the nearer are we to our rejoycing. Whatsoever joy rises before we come somewhat nigh the thing we hope for, is either none, or very little: and if Faith enter us not into our *Hope*, if *Hope* be grounded upon Opinion only, not on faith, it will scarce hold a shaking fit, See the *Apostles* order, *Rom. v. 3, 4, 5.* first *Tribulation*, then *Patience*, then *Experience*, then *Hope*, then, and not before, that *hope* which *maketh not ashamed*. Till you have been tried and tried again, patiently endured affliction and temptation, till your *Patience* be grown into *Experience*, till you are become an experienced Christian, have had experience both of Gods favours, and his frowns, and are become an experienced Souldier in the Christian Warfare, one well vers'd in that holy trade, you cannot have the *hope* which maketh not ashamed. All hope that rises not in this method will but shame you. In a word, first the *hope* of righteousness in the order I have told you, then the blessed *hope* of glory. All other is preposterous, and no better in the upshot, than that which is in this life only, for it will not hold, or not hold beyond it, though it talk never so much of another. No, without the *hope* of righteousness here, a *hope* that expresses it self by righteousness in this life, no *hope*, no true *hope*, I am sure, of glory in the other.

5. There is a fifth *Hope* that is as vain, which neither knows how to go about, nor pursue its ends, nor entertain them neither when they come. A kind of people there are who lay claim to much *hope in Christ*, yet when good motions arise within them to beget this *hope*, they either
carelessly

carelessly neglect, or wilfully quench them; when God shews them ways to confirm it, they mind it not; nay, when Salvation it self seems to knock at their very doors, they sit still, and stir not so much as to open and let it in; or if it fall out that they entertain it, 'tis with so much vanity and self-conceit, so much empty prattle and boasting of it self, so much shew and specious profession, that Christ in whom it is pretended to be all, is least of all seen in it. True *hope* is never without humility and discretion, it takes all opportunities to confirm and raise it self, manages its motions with all carefulness, sobriety, humility and godly fear, expects nothing but what in prudence it may, slips no time but what of necessity it must, uses whatsoever means it possibly can, yet without the least vain ostentation, to attain what it wishes and desires.

6. To this end (sixtly) it endeavours after holiness. The *hope* that does not so is no *true hope in Christ* at all. Every one that hath this *hope* purifies himself, says St. John, 1 Epist. iii. 3. hath his soul purified in obeying the Truth unto unfeigned love of the Brethren, adds St. Peter, 1 Epist. i. 22. 1 Pet. i. 21. St. Paul calls it a *hope of righteousness*, Gal. 5. 5. And the Psalmist joins Gal. 5. 5. to it doing good. Hope, and be doing good, Psal. xlii. 5. as if there Psal. 42. 5. could be no good *hope* without doing good, unless it did purifie us to all obedience and love. This is the only *hope in Christ* we read of for approv'd and sound; a pure, holy, obedient, operative, charitable *hope*. Whatever hope else is said to be in Christ, does but usurp the name, and is no such, and brings us no whither but to the end of the *verse*, to be most miserable.

Yet (7.) Stedfastness and constancy must be added to make *hope* compleat. Upon Faith it must be grounded (as we told you) and Faith can admit no wavering. Sure and stedfast, the Apostle calls it, Heb. vi. 19. Heb. 6. 19. Hope without wavering, Heb. x. 23. Anchor-hope, and Helmet-hope, Heb. 10. 23. strong and sure. Sure? nay, sure and firm unto the end too, Heb. iii. 6. Heb. 3. 6. So sure, as that it carries rejoycing with it, as if it had already obtain'd, Heb. vi. 11. No doubtful, sad, melancholick, wavering or unconstant piece Heb. 6. 11. of business, as the hopes of the world are, now up, now down, now merry, now sad; nor as those false hopes in Christ without ground taken up, without discretion pursued, and with impurities and impieties daily defiled will one day prove. No, nor yet any impatient expectation, but a hope with patience, as the blessed Apostle, 1 Thes. i. 3. a quiet and 1 Thes. i. 3. patient waiting for Christ, 2 Thes. iii. 5. to be content to endure any thing 2 Thes. 3. 5. though never so hard, any time, though never so long, and think nothing too much for his sake. There are so many mens hopes of the contrary nature, so impatient of any service or hardship, or endurance for Christ, that with most it is come to more then an *If*, If they have only a false hope in Christ, so it is without an *If* too evident, too common, the more the pitty.

I have been somewhat long in discovering the false hopes we have in Christ, which little differ either from impudence or presumption, (to say the least) because the religious world (as they would be accounted) is too full of them; because so many deceive themselves with their false glitterings, and will needs be (forsooth) the *Saints*, the only *Saints* who have *hope in Christ*, who neither know the nature nor feel the power of it. More false hopes even in Christ there are, but such as may well be reduced to these heads; as many false hopes as false beliefs, and they are more then I can tell you, more then any can, more however then the day would give us leave to tell you, if we would, or could.

A *hope in Christ*, (1.) that misconceives him, (2.) a groundless, (3.) unreasonable, (4.) preposterous, (5.) indiscreet, (6.) unholy, (7.) a wavering, inconstant and impatient hope are the only false hopes I have informed you of; you may reduce all others to them, but this one behind, which the Apostle seems to imply by the rule of contraries, when he tells us of a *hope* he had, which made *him use great plainness of speech*, 2 Cor. iii. 12. whereby he insinuates, that the hope through Christ to Godward by the ministration of the Spirit, not the Letter, as he styles it, *ver.* 4. 6. delights not in a kind of canting language, which nobody understands, but those of the same craft and occupation, none but themselves; no, nor themselves neither, though by an uncouth kind of holy language, through spiritual pride, they would fain seem to speak mysteries. No, *the Father of Lights* uses no Dark-Lanthorn language. If they mean good, why may we not understand them? If they fear not the detection of their falshoods, why do they cloud themselves and meanings in unscripture-like phrases? If they hop'd like Christians, they would speak like such, not like Barbarians, and then should we plainly understand them. For St. Paul's hope in the place fore-mentioned, and the hope of the *Fathers* ever since was in plainness of speech (we know what it means) from which these men so professedly swerving, we may justly suspect they are swerved also from the hope of the *Apostles*, and all Christian *Fathers*, have set up also a new hope different from theirs, and are become a kind of Christians different from them. This is a note you shall scarce meet with; but the observation of the hopes of our times compared with those of the *Apostles* times, and St. Paul's words brought it to my hands; and it almost seems the symptom, by thoroughly examining it, of all false, heretical and groundless hopes through all ages in *sects* and *Heresies*, as they rose; the changing the *Catholick* and received phrase into other terms: a new uncouth language for new and uncouth faiths and hopes.

By what has been said, you may now easily find out, whether your *hope in Christ* be as it should be, whether it will make happy or miserable. And by the same you may as easily perceive how false hopes generally delude the world. Yet to give you only a short prospect of them altogether now at last, that you may see them fully and yet briefly too, take it thus:

For men to play the *Devils*, and yet pretend to hope in God; to study *Schism*, Faction, and Contention, and yet pretend hope in the *Prince of Peace*; to run all the ways of destruction, and yet hope Salvation; to strive for nothing but this world, this only in all their carriages, and yet hope for another; to look for their portion and happiness hereafter, and yet will needs have all that is here; to hope for another life, and lead this no better; to be so solicitous to place *Christ's Kingdom* here, and yet mind none other but their own; to keep a do to set up *King Jesus* here (as they love to speak) and yet not suffer him to reign or rule in any of themselves; to hope for the reward of Peace-makers, to be call'd the *Saints and Children of God*, and yet be the only Peace-breakers, Peace-disturbers in *Church* and *State*, nay, and the great War-makers too; to hope for the reward of being persecuted for Christ, and yet daily persecute him in his members, and that even for his sake too, for his Religion and a good Conscience; to hope for the reward of the meek, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, which amounts to as much as Heaven and Earth, and yet be the most impure and proud and haughty,

ty, exalting themselves *above all that is called God*, proud of virtues and graces, and proud of sins, enormous sins too, are such riddles and contradictions, are such groundless, senseless, impudent hopes, that whatever they pretend of Christ, they are not only such as are in this life only, fading, vanishing and vain, but so only in Christ, as in the meer sound and noise and *echo* of the name, and even the greatest injury that can be done it, the vilest abuse that ever the name of Christian hope yet suffered.

Yet are we to proceed to another still. A hope in Christ, only for this life, the Second Particular we propounded, a hope that pretends no further then this present life: In this so much the more modest than the other, in that it pretends no further then it acts; in this only different from the other: This denies the Resurrection, the other the power of it; this more expressly, the other implicitly; this sometimes both in words and deeds (so much the honefter,) the other in deed only, in words never, so much the proner to deceive us. But who are they, now, whose hope in Christ is only in this life? Or, what is it to hope in Christ in this life only? Lets see a little.

1. They plainly *have hope in Christ in this life only*, who deny his Resurrection: For if he be not risen, if he be yet in the Grave, and his body among the atoms of the dust (alas!) there must needs our hope end too, thither must it go and sleep there for ever. He was no more then a poor man as we, if he be not risen; and if our hope be in man *whose breath is in his nostrils*, then when God takes away his breath he dies, and our hopes die with him. The point of Christs Resurrection then is the hinge of all our hope. Best to keep close to that Article, or we lose all our Religion quite, and must go seek some other. If he that should save us be not able save himself, if our hope be hid in him, and he hid for ever in his ashes; if he that should deliver us, delivered not himself from death, we have no reason to expect beyond it, and then little comfort to look beside it upon any good we can here get by it.

2. They who deny our Resurrection, can hope no further in Christ then in this life only. If we rise no more here's all we look for. And if Christ, in whom we hope, can do us any good, it must be here, for he has no where else to do it, if when we die we perish. So to deny a Resurrection, is plainly to confine our hope within this present world; to the narrow limits of an uncertain life. Yet such there were in the *Apostles* times, as appears, *ver. 12.* some among the *Corinthians*, who said there was no Resurrection of the dead. Of which sort also were *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, who affirm'd the Resurrection was past already, *2 Tim. ii. 18.* nothing more to be expected, and thereby says St. Paul, *overthrew the faith of some.* I cannot punctually point out to you amidst the confused rout of Errors and Heresies, which now swarm and reign amongst us, any such who dare yet expressly say so much. Yet if they who are so hot for Christs temporal reign upon earth (of which there are good store) be not such, they look very like them; like men, I am sure who *have hope in Christ in this life only*, or at least too much in it, more than they should; and if we may guess at them by their actions, they and many other of that pious rabble seem to mean it, and would express it, if it were time to do it; or it may be, do it already in their Congregations and private Meetings, if we could come to hear them. I am sure it concerns them much that there be no Resurrection, and to think so too, if they desire to go on confidently and quietly, without

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That hope in Christ in this life only is a false hope also, and what it is.

1 Cor. 15. 12.

2 Tim. 2. 18.

without the throbs of an accusing and condemning conscience in the courses they are in.

3. Such are they also truly in effect, who deny Christs satisfaction, who will acknowledge no other benefit from his Life, or Death, or Resurrection than good example. If he be risen only for himself, or not risen at all, 'tis all one to us; all one, I say, to us, if we have no benefit by his Resurrection: I think they will not say themselves we can rise out of the grave, only by a pattern. If there be no power in his Resurrection that extends to us, well may he be risen, but we shall not rise if he raise not us. We know then quickly where is all our hope.

4. Such are they again, who only follow Christ for loaves, who only therefore embrace or follow the Christian faith, and take up Christs Religion only to maintain themselves, and such or such a Sect thereof, because it is the only way they see to live and thrive by. Here at this prospect, now, you see there are more hopes in Christ in this life only than perhaps before you did imagine; whilst you behold so many change their Religion, new-form their faith, new-model their profession, alter and assume opinion after opinion for this poor thing we call a life, for the poorest things of it, to save the skin or gain a penny. An act so unworthy of a Christian that it blasphemes the name, and makes us yet put another *If*, to the *Apostles*, If this be faith in Christ, any is. If this be true, there is none vain. If these be *Christi fideles*, who are *Infideles*? If these be *Christs faithful ones*, who are *infidels*? Who, but those who look for another World, who believe that Christ is risen, and they shall one day rise after him, and therefore in the interim rise above this foolish world and the things of it in all their thoughts?

5. Many other hopes there be which have too much tincture of this life in them, too much infected with the interests of this present life; which seem so much to be possessed with it, that upon loss of Friends, or Liberty, or Estate, or Honour, or the fear of such probable or threatened losses, the men that have these hopes only, they grieve, and moan, and fear, and are perplexed, and troubled, and amazed, as men *without hope*, as the *Apostle* styles them, without hope of a recompence of a reward, as if Christ either could not, or else would not make them a recompence for all their sufferings, all their losses, and therefore go like men forsaken and forlorn, not weighing how infinite ways Christ can at any time both return them here, and beyond desire or imagination reward them all hereafter, but grieve as if there were no other World but this, nothing to make amends for ever. I say not, that these kind of hopeless hopes are any thing near so bad as the other, yet bad they are, and have too much both of distrust and worldly interest in them. Though they deny not a Resurrection, they seem to fear it; though they reject not quite the thoughts of another World, yet they seem to doubt it; though they now and then think well of Christ, they dare not trust him, unless they can feel him and his reward in present with him. The other indeed bid defiance to him, or else march impudently against him in his own colours; these only shrink from him, yet do enough to make us see too much of their hope in Christ is fixed here, enough to embitter all their lives, and make them miserable, if they settle not their souls a little better, and rouse up their spirits to eternal hopes.

6. Nay, more than so. Those very spiritual joys and inward comforts which we feel within us, and which sustain us in all our miseries, are but delusions, dreams, and fancies if there be no Resurrection, if

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we or they must end here ; poor slender hopes to uphold us, if they rest only in present complacences. The *Turk* (for ought we can say) has as much in the service of his *Mahomet*. The *Idolater* feels the same, if perhaps not more, when he has done his sacrifice to his *Idol* ; he is pleas'd no doubt, and much rejoyces in it when he has done his Worship. Every false *Sect*, no doubt, has some like complacences within, whereby it is confirm'd in its Superstitions ; and, it may be, the more to fasten them, *Satan*, that *metamorphos'd Angel of light*, does, by adding somewhat of sensible pleasure to them, make those inward illusions and delights far sweeter in the apprehension than the true Christians many times. Nay, and the resolute Sinner shall find a kind of subtle delight and appearing contentment in the custom of his sins, (especially of spiritual sins, false Zeal, Heresie, Schism, Singularity, or the like) does so commonly for a while, till Conscience begin a little to remember him ; would do so for ever but for the tang and touch of conscience, which ever and anon strikes in on a sudden and thwarts or allayes them, which yet it could not do if there were no Resurrection to call them to accompt. So that those great pledges and fore-runners of our eternal happiness would be either none, or not what they are, or but the fading glances of a perishing hope, if they had not a relish from those infinite and everlasting joyes we look for. And whoever he is, that shall endure what a Christian must, only for those slender (and peradventure uncertain) contentations here (which yet truly are not so much, or it may be, none at all to fully reasonable souls if they bring not with them the promises of a fuller stream of a yet-to-be-expected satisfaction) whoever he be, he does but vainly place his labour. It is the glances of the other World that make any thing look beautiful in this. It is only those eternal sweetneses above, which give the taste to all these below of what kind soever, if they relish truly well. And be our hopes, though in Christ himself, fed with any thing but them, or with things that have relation to them, we may put them all into this number, that the Apostle reckons only to make *most miserable*.

Be they hopes in Christ without an eye (1.) to his rising out the grave, or (2.) without our rising thence ; (3.) Do they deny the power of Christs Resurrection, or (4.) mind him only for worldly things, not regarding other, or (5.) through infirmity fix too much upon things of this life, or (6.) please themselves only in some inward complacences and delights without reference to eternal blessings, they are no other. If any of these ways only we have hope in Christ, we have hope in him in this life only, and are of all men most miserable. Which close puts me in mind now of the third Particular. The Effect of all these If-Hopes, these but supposed, vain hopes, Misery, and the worst the most misery. *We are then of all men most miserable*.

Miserable ! But what should make us so ? What, but that which makes up misery ? Pain and Loss. Lost joyes, deluded hopes, and real pains, troubles, and infelicities. We shall not need to go out of this very Chapter, which has given us the *Text*, to find enough to make up a bulk of Misery.

1. For Loss.

1. We have lost our head. Christ is not risen if our hope be only here. He is dead still if there be no Resurrection, and we are at the best but walking Ghosts, horrors to others, and to our selves. We may well go with the *Disciples* to *Emma*, a word that signifies forlorn people ; go

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3.
The Effect of
false Hopes,
Misery.

1. Loss. Loss
of all good.

among forlorn people indeed if he be dead still. We have lost our spirits, our senses, our life and all, if our head be gone; we are a generation of senseless, liveless, silly people to be Christians still.

2. We have lost our labours and our sufferings too. *What availeth it, that we stand in jeopardy every hour if the dead rise not at all? ver. 30. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not? ver. 32.* What are all St. Pauls labours and travels, watchings and fastings, whippings, and imprisonments, his suffering cold and nakedness, hunger and thirst, contumelies and reproaches, his journeys and his shipwracks, his so many perils both by Sea and Land, his chastening his body and keeping it under, his so often perils of death by treachery, by hostility, many other ways, his so many persecutions, and after them even death it self? To what purpose all these if there be no place or opportunity hereafter to reward them? What mean these foolish Christians so to subject themselves to cruel mockings and scourgings, to bonds and imprisonments, to stoning, burning, sawing in sunder, to Swords, and Racks, and Gibbets? What mean they to wander up and down in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, when they may have better clothing far cheaper? To wander up and down from house to house, when they may at an easier rate have houses of their own? To wander up and down in Deserts and Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the earth, when they may with greater ease have stately buildings and glorious Palaces to dwell in? Why are they so foolish to be thus tortured and tormented, and accept of no deliverance, if it were not that they might obtain a better Resurrection, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Heb. xi. 35.* and so on. Else if there be no such business, *Let's eat and drink,* says St. Paul, *for to morrow we die.* Let's crown our heads with rose-buds in the the spring, and take our fill of loves, let's stretch our selves upon our beds, and drench our selves in pleasures, deny nothing to our desires, abridge our selves of no delights, care not by what means we rush into Riches, Pleasures, Lusts, and Honours: If there be no other World, let's take our portion here, and let's not be such fools and mad men to lose all here and hereafter too. This is better doctrine then the cold Precepts of Christianity if there be no other hope than what is here. But *be not deceived* for all this, says our *Apostle*, *ver. 33.* 'tis but evil communication this; though so it were not, but good, wise counsel rather, if there were nothing beyond this life. But *awake, awake to righteousness,* for there is a Resurrection, where both our labours and our sufferings shall be remembered all.

3. We have lost our Faith if our hope in Christ be only here; *Your faith is vain,* ver. 14. Our Religion's gone, there's no such thing as that in Christianity, then. Religion is our business towards God, but if Christ be not risen (as he is not, if we can hope in him no further than this life only) then he is no God, so our Religion is but foolery, and we miserable fools to busie our heads so much about it, about the name, and nature, and worship, and service, and trusting of a dead Redeemer, that can neither help himself nor us, no nor hear a Prayer, nor grant a Request, nor reward a Duty, nor punish an Injury done to him.

Nay, (4.) we have lost our very hope too. If we have no hope but here, we have none at all, we can hope for nothing that flees not from us. Do we hope for honours or riches by following Christ? We see daily we are deluded. Do we hope for happiness by it upon earth? We see nothing

nothing but misery about us, and death before us. Nay, do we hope indeed for any good by Christ yet lying in the Grave? What is it that a dead Saviour can give us more than the dead Idols of the Heathen? We see and feel our hopes in this life already vain, and for hereafter we can see nothing at all without a Resurrection.

Yes, say some now adays. If the soul live we may be happy without a Resurrection, though the body rise not, if the soul be but immortal. Fond men! who consider not how *if the body rise not, then Christ is not risen* (the *Apostles* own way of arguing, *ver. 15.*) and then our faith, which was in Christ being perished, as being no other than in a helpless, hopeless man, the soul can neither enjoy, nor expect a happiness from, or by him, and has lost all other by following him already. Not considering again how the greatest misery that can betide the soul is to wander desolate and disconsolate for ever without both her body and her Christ, depriv'd eternally of all kinds of hopes. Not considering, lastly, that the souls immortality necessarily infers a Resurrection, it being but a fore-runner and a harbinger for the body, to which it hath so natural a reference and inclination, that happiness it could have none, when separated from the body, if it did not perceive the certainty of its bodies rising a while after to accompany it. It could not without that certificate but be incessantly tormented with its own unsatisfied and ever to be unsatisfied longings, which it could throw off no more, than it could its own nature and essence, it being essentially created and deputed to the body.

But Loss makes not all our misery. Not only loss of good, but sense of evil concurs also to make us miserable. And here's enough of this, too, for us, if in this life only be our hope. *You are yet in your sins*, that first. And what greater evil, I pray, than sin? What greater misery than to be under the dominion of it? To be torn in pieces with the distractions of our sins, to be tormented with inordinate desires, to be hurried up and down with exorbitant lusts, to be enslaved to the drudgeries of so base commands, to be rackt with the terrors of a wounded conscience, to be distracted quite with the horrors of inevitable damnation, to be at war continually within our selves, to be commanded by every petty lust, to be a drudge to every filthy sin, to have a soul and body full of nothing but pollution, nothing clean, nothing pure, nothing quiet, nothing peaceable within it; thus to persist and continue, thus to live and die, neither our own Masters, nor our own men, no misery more miserable. You talk of slavery and tyranny, there's none like this of sin and lusts. *You shall die in your sins*, says Christ to the *Jews*, *St. John viii. 24.* as the greatest misery he could leave them under. Sin'd we have all, and die in them too we must all of us as well as they, for all Christ, if we have no hope in him but here. He is not such a Saviour as can deliver us, if he have not delivered himself; or if he have, and we yet will not hope in him beyond this life, and the things of this life, we shall also die in our sins and be miserable as well as they.

2.
Pain or sense
of evil.

John 8. 24.

This is ill enough, yet there is a worse misery behind: We shall perish too. *Then all they also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished*, *ver. 18.* perished for ever; whether you take it for *annihilation*, or for *damnation*, whether for being dissolved into nothing, or being damn'd for ever, either of them is misery enough.

Let the best befall you that can, 'tis to perish into nothing, (and yet there are that say it is the worst, that to be annihilated is worse than to

be damn'd ; perversly, I fear, more to maintain a cruel opinion against Gods goodness, (which in some mens favour meerly they have undertaken obstinately to defend) by setting up an absolute reprobation, then that either sense or reason can perswade any unprejudiced judgment, that it is so.) Well, be that kind of perishing what it will, let that be it, to have our breath vanish into the soft air, as the *wise man* Phrases it, and have our bodies disperse into insensible *Atomes*, or rather to become truly nothing, you cannot think it but a misery ; if for nothing else, yet for this, that men of honour and understanding should become no better than the beasts that perish, to have so fair and glorious a building as mans moulder into nothing. And if death alone be terrible, to die into nothing is to nature much more, insomuch as it is further from the principles of it than any the most horrid corruption or putrefaction. If a man die, shall he live again ? In *Jobs* worst *agony* was but a question : but if a man once fall into nothing, He, the same He, cannot live again is no question at all. He shall not, cannot. Something may be made of nothing, but the same thing cannot be re-made out of it. There is not any thing, hell only excepted (for we however, for our parts, will except that) can be so bad, so far from all the properties of all kind of good, *Metaphysical, Physical, and Moral* too, as this *Non ens*, this *Nothing* we must resolve into at the best that can befall us if there be no Resurrection.

But I may go a strain higher, and tell you but the truth. If there be no Resurrection, yet they that *sleep in Christ*, sleep (if I may use so soft a word) in damnation too. The Soul is immortal (however some in this worst of Ages are so impudent to give out it is not, because they truly wish it were not, and it much concerns them that it should not, yet) the Soul, I say, is immortal and cannot die, must therefore upon necessity be miserable, if it depart its lodging without hope either of seeing its expected Saviour, or her beloved body ever again ; must needs wander, and pine, and fret, and desire, and despair, and be never satisfied, find no content in any thing, no ease in any turn of thought, or motion of desire, restless and unsatisfied every way, every where for ever.

Nay, again, whether there be any Resurrection or no ; *If Christ be not risen* too, we may yet perish everlastingly, amidst the everlasting fires. For our Saviour will prove none, our Religion none, our recompence no other than those burnings.

Nay, lastly, if there be a Resurrection, and if Christ be risen too, yet if our *hope* be not risen also, if we believe, and hope, and desire no further than this life only ; if our endeavours and labours be only for this life we live, if our hopes be none other than one or other of those false ones, which I have told you of, the place of eternal torment and despair is only what we can expect, even so to perish, there to be miserable for ever.

Sum up now the issue of our hopes, without relation to another life, and tell me what they are all else but misery. To lose our head, our life, our Saviour, our pains and labour, all our sufferings too ; to lose our faith, our Religion, our hope and all, to live and die without it ; to live perpetually under the tyranny of Sins, and Lusts, and Devils, and in death to depart uncomfortably into torments, or, at the best, to be no more, to become meer nothing ; to live a miserable, wretched, tedious life, full of rigours and austerities, denying our selves the freedom and pleasures that all others take, a life full of afflictions and miseries too, for no better a recompence than meer nothing at the last, nothing at the best, yea, worse rather,

rather than what we can imagine nothing at the most, and that without any hope for ever, has all the ingredients of the utmost misery.

And yet in miseries there are degrees, and of miserable persons degrees too; some more miserable than others, some most miserable. 'Tis the last of the four Particulars of the first General. *we of all men are most miserable.*

we Christians, that you have heard, *we* of all Religions the most miserable. But of all Christians, *we* the Apostles, *we* the Ministers of Christ, *we* the most miserable of those, who are the most miserable company, *we* more miserable than all the world beside. This is still behind.

4.
The persons
which are
most misera-
ble of all.

Two things the Holy Apostle in this very Chapter, adds to make it so. *we* are then found false witnesses of God, ver. 15. What could be said more to our dishonour? To be nothing else but a company of base, impudent lyars, to make a Trade and Profession of it to gull people into misery, to be the Devils own Embassadors and Agents to bring in souls daily into Hell, to add this dishonour to our misery, not only to be miserable Christians, but both the causers of their miseries by so dishonourable a baseness as a perpetual course of lying, and the wilful Authors of our own, is that which adds much height to our already too great misery.

To this there is an addition, yet, *Our Preaching is also vain and needless*, ver. 14. We are persons of whom there is no use, our Function so far from holy, that it is but folly; our labour and studies (from the first of those tedious days and broken nights of studies, of our exhausted spirits and neglected fortunes and preferments to attend our work) to no purpose at all. Thus besides those common miseries of a hopeless life with other Christians, We have most vile dishonour, and a whole lost life, and a whole vain course of labour added to encrease our misery.

A third addition we have by the same Pen in this Epistle, Chap. iv. v. 9. and so forward to augment our misery beyond a Parallel. *we* are men appointed unto death, made a spectacle unto the World, unto Angels, unto Men; fools for Christs sake, weak and despised, hungry and thirsty, and naked, and buffeted, and without any certain dwelling place, outed at any bodies pleasure, labouring day and night, reviled, persecuted, defamed by every tongue, made the filth and off-scouring of the world, and of all things even to this day, ver. 13. hated and envied of all kind of men; the world hateth you, says our Master, for whose sake it does so, S. John xv. 19. hated of all men said I; yea, hated of God too, if our preaching be vain, and there be no hope in Christ but here; Miserable fools sure, no such fools in the world again as we, to endure all this in vain, to place, or keep our selves in so slavish, so dishonourable, so troublesom, so afflictive, so contemptible a condition, when with the same or easier pains, less cost, fewer broken sleeps, more worldly content, larger liberties, fuller friendships, freer entertainments, greater hopes we might take many several ways and courses of life more profitable, more pleasurable, more honourable: Nor can we be so ignorant of our selves and parts many of us, nor find we, else, any other reason to distrust, but that we might in any other way promise to our selves as much power to mannage other means of thriving then Books and Papers, as any others, if we would apply our selves to the same ways and undertakings with them. And had we no other hope but here, you should quickly find we could do so, were we not confident we serve a Master the Lord Christ, whose service as it is perfect freedom, so it is perfect honour, whatever the world imagine it, or please to call it; were it not for the hope of a Resurrecti-

1 Cor. 4. 9,
10, &c.

S. Joh. 15. 19.

on, when we shall find a sufficient recompence for all the affronts, contempts and ill usages we suffer here, where these ragged blacks shall be guilded over with the bright beams of glory, where we, whose office it is to turn many unto righteousness, (whatever be the success) if we do our duty, shall shine like *Stars for ever and ever*, Dan. xii. 3. So now you see the scene of the *Text* is altered quite, there is evidence enough by our willingly and knowingly subjecting our selves to all these fore-mentioned sufferings, that our *hope in Christ* is not only here, and we no longer, never *miserable*. All before but a Supposition, this the Truth (which I told you should be the Second General, though only summarily and exceeding briefly) that, Our *hope*, the true Christians *hope* is not *in Christ* for *this life only*; and therefore whoever is, he, to be sure, is not *miserable*.

II. General.
The Christi-
ans hope is
not in Christ
for this life
only.

That our *Hope* is not only here, is evident by so many signs, that I shall only need but shew and name them as I pass. We willingly suffer hardships, bear restraints, deny our freedoms, debar our selves many lawful liberties, lay by our hopes of worldly honour, think not of the most profitable and probable preferments, we contend to rigours and austerities, we watch our paths, we mark our steps, we make scruples where the world makes none; we accept restrictions in our lives, that the worldling and gallant laugh at, the whole business of our life is to be accepted of Christ our Saviour, we remember his benefits, we observe his days, we believe his Resurrection and keep this Feast upon it; we solemnize the memory of all his other glorious actions, sufferings, and mercies, with all holy reverence and godly fear, with thankfulness and love; we hear his Word and study it, we strive to do his will and fulfil his Commandements, at every point passing by the satisfactions of our own inclinations and desires; we receive his Sacraments and believe their power, we by this *days solemnity* confess his rising, and profess our own; we leave all worldly interests for his, bid adieu to all contentations, which stand not with that, which is in him; we suffer any thing gladly for his sake, to be counted fools and mad-men, despised and trampled on, revil'd and persecuted, exil'd and tortur'd, and slain for his sake, for our hope in him, for that we fear to displease him, to lose his reward. These are full manifestos of the true Christians hope, what it is he looks for, what he means. For who now can think by the very naming of these doings and sufferings, truly acted and willingly undergone, that our hope is either not in Christ, or not in him beyond this life, who so easily condemn this, all the glories and pleasures of it, and choose with deliberation and full consent that only in it, which the world counts misery, or affliction? Especially if he but consider that we are not crazed men that do so, but have our senses perfect, our understanding clear, clearer many of us than the greatest part even of understanding men, the same passions with other men, as sensible of any evils or afflictions naturally as any others, and yet notwithstanding choose all this for our hopes sake in Christ only.

And when all these shall be new heapt, and more imbittered to the Ministers of the Gospel above others, through the spite of the world, and the malice of the Devil on purpose to drive them from their hope, and they daily see and know it, are they such miserable fools and mad-men, think you, not only to perswade others to these courses, but themselves also so readily to undergo them when they might enjoy all liberties and pleasures at an easier rate as well as others, did they

they not verily believe and hope, and even see and feel already by evident testimonies both within and without, an abundant recompence hovering over them, laid up for them, superabundant, in a Resurrection.

World now do thy worst against us, thou canst not make us miserable, do all thou canst, not miserable at all. We scorn thy spite, We contemn thy malice: We shall have another world when thou art none, we shall out-live thy malice, thy self. Whilst thou art in thy greatest pride and glory, (Lo!) we trample on thee, and when thou thinkest thou hast laid both us and all our honour in the dust, we are above thee, thou art made our foot-stool; and thou thy self, as scornfully as now thou look'st upon us, shalt be one day forc'd to vomit up those morsels of us which thou hast swallowed, and will't thou, nill't thou, bring all our scatter'd ashes, and least atomes of our meanest parts together, and humbly offer them at the feet of the meanest Christian soul whom thou at at any time despoiled'st of them, and either shrink away confounded with our glory, or else be glad of a Resurrection as well as we. Whilst those miserable wretches, that thou so much courtedst and delightedst in, and that thy *Prince*, who rul'd and abus'd thee to all his lusts, shall down together into eternal misery, when those poor despised Christians, whom thou so much maligned'st shall reign in glory.

That the Christian of all men is not miserable.

Miserable they were not here, maugre all the world could do against them; they had that peace, that joy, that contentment still within, which the world could neither give, nor take away. They found an unspeakable as well pleasure as glory in their very afflictions and bitterest sufferings, being exceeding glad, and counting all joy to be made so like their *Master*, whose *Ministers*, or whose Servants they were; with him, *despising the shame* and trouble of a contemptible and afflictive life or death, for the joy set before them, for the hope they saw at the right hand of the Throne of God. Thus feeling nothing that could be truly or properly called misery, whilst they took pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake, as St. *Paul* professes he did, 2 *Cor.* xii. 10. whilst it all serv'd only to their contentment here, and augment their happiness and glory hereafter, they sure lost nothing then, they are not miserable now, who are so fain asleep. And lift up your heads, ye drooping Christians, still, they shall not be miserable, that so at any time fall asleep, but rise and live again, and be yet more happy, every one in their order, every star their glory, every star a different ray, according to their hope and sufferings here; as no men so little miserable here, if all things be truly pondered: so no men so happy hereafter as the Christians; they of all men, above all men, souls and bodies, both Pastor and People, all that live and die under the glorious hope of a Resurrection by Christ, who place not their hopes or affections in this life, but in Him and in the other, of all men, they, most blessed, most eternally blessed.

To which blessed estate after this life ended, He who is our *Hope*, and who (we hope) will keep us in it. He in whom we trust, and I trust, shall do so still, not for this life only, but the other too, but for ever. He of his mercy convey and bring us all, every one in his due time and order, even our *Lord Jesus Christ*. To whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be all praise and glory, not in this life only, but for ever and ever.

Amen.

A
S E R M O N
U P O N
Ascension Day.

P S A L. XXIV. 3, 4.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand up in his holy place?

Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, and hath not lift up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbour.



Who shall ascend, indeed, if none must ascend but he that is clean and pure, and without vanity and deceit? The question is quickly answered, None shall, for there is none so: dust is our matter, so not clean; defiled is our nature, so not pure; lighter the heaviest of us than vanity, and deceitful upon the balance the best of us, *Psal. lxii. 9.* so no ascending so high for any of us.

Yet there is one we hear of, or might have heard of to day, that rose and ascended up on high, was thus qualified as the *Psalmist* speaks of, all clean and pure, no chaff at all, no guile found in his mouth, *1 Pet. ii. 22.* Yea, but it was but one that was so; What's that to all the rest? Yes, somewhat 'tis. *He* was our *head*, and if the head be once risen and ascended, the members will all follow after in their time.

Indeed, 'tis not for every one to hope, any but such as are of *his*, that follow *him*, that belong to *him*. 'Tis a high priviledge that the *Psalmist* stands admiring at, and therefore not for all; yet for all that will, for a who shall here is a who will, set up for all that will accept of the condition. *Quis ascendet*, is who *will*, as well as who *shall*. They that will take the pains, will do what they can to be clean and pure, *they* shall. His innocence and purity shall help out for the rest when they have done their best. But if any man will ascend he must do his best, must be clean and pure with Christ, and through him, or he shall not ascend and rise up after him. 'Tis the Lesson we are to learn, from *Ascension day* to *Whitsunday*, how to ascend after Christ into the hill of the Lord, how to rise up
in

in his holy place, *even to have clean hands and pure hearts, not to lift up our minds to vanity, or swear to deceive our neighbour, to have our hands ascend, and our hearts ascend, and our minds ascend, and our words ascend, as into his presence, all ascend after him.*

The *Psalm* is one of them which the *Church* appoints for *Ascension day*, and I see not but it may very well pass for a kind of Prophecie by way of an extatical admiration at the sight of Christs Ascension. So it pass'd with the Fathers, and without Fathers too, may so with us; for never was it so fulfill'd to a tittle, as by Christ and his Ascension. He the only *he* of clean hands, and pure heart, and holy mouth, and holy *all*, he the first that entred heaven, that got up the hill, that entred into the holy place not made with hands, *Heb. ix. 24, &c.* Not any doors so properly everlasting as those of heaven, nor they ever open'd for any King of glory to come in, as it is *ver. 7.* but him. I cannot tell how we should expound it otherwise, without much more metaphor and figure.

Yet I will allow it too for the *Prophets* admiration at the fore-sight of the happiness of Gods peculiar people, and their condition: that God, whose the whole earth is and all its fulness, *ver. 1.* should out of all its places choose *Sion* for his place; he whose the World is, and all that dwell therein (as it follows there) should choose out the *Jews*, amongst all the dwellers, to dwell among, them only to serve him upon that hill; that, further, this God, whose all is, should still of this *all* so particularly honour some, as to give them the priviledge of his hill and holy place, his solemn Worship and Service, to go up first into his holy places upon earth, and then afterwards ascend into the holy places the heavens (for the words mean the one as well as the other.) Who are they? What a sort of people are they that are so happy, so much exalted upon the earth, and over it? 'Tis worth the admiring, worth the enquiring, and we find it presently who they be, even such as have *clean hands, and pure hearts, that lift not up their minds to vanity, nor their mouths to wickedness or deceit.*

In *Sum*, these are the only men that shall ascend those everlasting hills, those eternal holy places, that are only worthy to enter into Gods houses and holy places of the earth too, obtain those admirable priviledges, that are innocent, and pure, and just, and true, the only *men* worth the admiring, as the Church and heaven, the hill of the Lord and his holy place are the only *things* are worth it; Heaven is for none but such, and when we enter into the holy places we should all be such, as none have right to enter them indeed but such.

Well, now the business of the Text is in brief the way to *Sion*, and to Heaven, to the hill of the Lord, and his holy place, both that here, and that hereafter, where we have,

First, the *Condition of being admitted* thither.

Then, the *Condition of them that are.* The first in the former of the two verses, the second in the latter.

I. The Condition of being admitted or ascending into the hill of the Lord, or standing up in his holy place, what it is, that is, what, or how great a business it is to be Gods peculiar people, to be allow'd to enter into his Courts here, and into Heaven at last; what it is; why!

'Tis (1.) a *priviledge*; some one, not every one; some few, not all; Who shall? Is, all shall not.

'Tis (2.) a *high one*. 'Tis an ascent, a rise; 'tis to a hill, and the hill of the Lord; who shall ascend, who shall rise up; *who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? who shall rise up?*

'Tis (3.) a *holy one*, 'tis to the hill of the Lord, to a holy place.

'Tis (4.) an *admirable one*, the Prophet starts aside, as it were, from his discourse, and wonders at it, who it is should be so honoured.

'Tis (5.) a *glorious one*. For the hill of the Lord is not only an earthly hill, his holy place, not that only made with hands; the words are as applicable to that of Heaven, and Glory, and so understood.

'Tis yet (6.) *hard to be come by*. 'Tis an ascent, hard and steep; a high Hill, no easie Plain; raise and rouse our selves up we must to get it, stand up to get and keep it.

And lastly (that we may take in all the possible senses of the Text) 'tis *Christ's* proper privilege, his *præ aliis*, his first and above all others, therefore delivered in the Singular, *Qui*, not *Qui*, who is *he*, not who are *they* that shall? Though they, others also shall, yet they but by him; he first, they after, he properly rises and ascends, they more properly are rais'd and drawn after him.

II. The Condition now (2.) of them that are so thus admitted to all these privileges, is,

1. That they *have clean hands*.

That (2.) they *have pure hearts* too.

That (3.) they *lift not up their mind to vanity*.

That (4.) they *swear not deceitfully, or to deceive*.

The Privilege we are to speak of is a real one, a high one, a holy one, an admirable one, a glorious one; and though hard to be come by, yet to be come by (though) through him. The condition upon which we are to come by it, (1.) Innocency, (2.) Purity, (3.) Righteousness, (4.) Truth, yet all too little without him. He ascended to this purpose, that we also might ascend after him, that's the Lesson we are now to teach you; two parts it has, the Condition of the Privilege of the hill of the Lord; and the Conditions of our Performance for it; the one the Condition to be obtained, and the other the Conditions to be performed; the admission into the hill of the Lord and his holy place, that the Condition to be obtained; Innocence and Purity, freedom from vanity and deceit, they the Conditions to obtain it. I now enter upon the first, to shew what is the Condition we may ascend to, what a great and glorious one it is to ascend into the hill of the Lord, and to rise up in his holy place.

I. Several senses I intimated to you of the words: (1.) Some understanding by the hill of the Lord and his holy place, the *material* hill and house of *Sion*, and thence our Christian Churches; (2.) Others the *spiritual* house and building, the faithful and true members of the Church; (3.) Others the *eternal* house of heaven, the hill of *Sion* which is above. Each of them is called Gods hill or holy place. *Sion* Gods hill, *Psal.* ii. 6. and *lxviii.* 15. The *Temple* his holy place, *Exod.* xxvi. 33. The *Church* the house of God, not to be us'd like our own houses, and therefore a holy place, *1 Cor.* xi. 22. The Faithful the *Temples*, the *Dwellings*, the *Buildings*, the *House of God*, *1 Cor.* iii. 17. *2 Tim.* i. 14. *1 Cor.* iii. 9. *Heb.* iii. 6. Heaven, lastly, is called *Mount Sion*, *Heb.* xii. 2. *Rev.* xiv. 1. The holy place, *Heb.* ix. 12. The true Tabernacle and Sanctuary, *Heb.* viii. 2. Be it which

of

of these it will, or be it all, to ascend into any of them is a condition worth the considering; to be admitted into Gods House and Temple, to be admitted into the Family of true Believers, especially to be exalted so high as into heaven. To be in any of these Conditions, is to be in good condition, a Condition which is,

1. A *Priviledge*; a peculiar favour, not for every body to arrive at, 'tis a question who shall get it; not every one, says Christ. The faithful they are a little flock, St. *Luk.* xii. 32. A chosen Generation, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. Few there are of such, St. *Mat.* xx. 16. only a parcel that Christ has given him by his Father, St. *John* vi. 39. To you it is given, says he himself, St. *Mat.* xiii. 11. to some it is given, to some it is not. So a priviledge it is to stand thus upon Mount *Sion* with the *Lamb*, *Rev.* xiv. 1. to be in the number of those that follow him whithersoever he goes.

And it will prove a Priviledge (2.) to be of those that go up to the House of the Lord, among them that keep holy day, that is, that go up to serve him there. Now he has not dealt so with any Nation, any but his own, *Psal.* cxlvii. 20. If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, then he will bring me again, and shew me his Ark, and his Habitation, says David, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25. And if a favour it be, not to be debarr'd the House of God in *Shiloh* or *Hierusalem*, is it less, think we, to be allowed the liberty of Christian Churches, to praise God in the great Congregations? St. *Paul* counts it a mercy, 2 *Thes.* ii. 1. this gathering together unto him; much comfort in it, as in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is there joyn'd with it. *Non omnis*, I am sure we find it, all have not the Priviledge: we are out of Gods favour the while, and he seems to have no delight in us, when he denies us at least to suspend the shewing it, as he did there to David when he fled from *Absolom*; a Priviledge sure all count it to have a place to serve God in together, there would not else be such contention for it, who should, and who should not.

But for that hill of hills, (3.) far exalted above all hills, to ascend thither, to be lift so high, that's a priviledge without contradiction. 'Tis given to none but for whom it is prepared, St. *Mat.* xx. 23. few there are that find it, St. *Mat.* vii. 14. 'tis meerly at our Fathers good pleasure to give it, St. *Luke* xii. 32. neither of him that wills, nor him that runs, but of God that shews mercy; we have no other claim but mercy to it. Only, fear not for all that, says Christ, St. *Luke* xii. 32. he ushers in the priviledge so; And (2.) strive to enter too, says he, for all that; though the gate be streight, 'tis not impassable for them that strive and labour for it; And then (3.) too admire his goodness, say we, who yet leaves ope the gate to enter to any penitent sinner, that will strive and labour for it; who sets up a *Si quis* in the Market-place, sets it upon the doors and skreens of our Churches and Chappels, sets his Prophets too to proclaim and cry it, Who will ascend, who will come and stand up in his holy place, come serve him here a while, and reign with him for ever? This Priviledge, though all attain not to, is not such as any are absolutely excluded from; that no more enjoy it, is because they voluntarily exclude themselves: they shall not, because they will not take the pains; 'tis no Decree against any, though a Priviledge for some.

Such a one indeed it is, and a high one too, a high Priviledge (2.) to be Sons and Heirs to the most High can be no less, to be raised so to the tops of the hills, above all the Nations of the World: You only have I known of all the Families of the earth, *Amos* iii. 2. to be the only men that God

knows, that he takes notice of in the World to be a *Kingly Priesthood*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. made Kings and Priests, *Rev.* i. 6. this is high. And,

High it is (2.) too to be admitted into his House and holy Temple. Every one came not there, not all the *Levites*, not all the *Priests*. A high favour it was, allow'd to some only to enter there. Why, the *Lord loveth the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob*, says the *Psalmist*; all the high places and Palaces of the earth are not in so high esteem with God as the very Gates and Ports of *Sion*; to be suffered but to peep in there is a higher honour, to be a door-keeper in the House of God a greater happiness than to dwell in the most magnifque buildings of the World. *David*, a King himself, had rather be there than any where. And he that shall consider the Primitive Zeal of Christians to these hills, how they never thought enough bestow'd upon them, how often they frequented them, how they would not pass without going in and worshipping; how the pious and devout souls thought it a happiness to look that way, and a great comfort in the midst of their desolations and captivity; cannot but confess they all thought high enough of the favour that God allowed them in receiving them into those hills and holy places.

A higher Priviledge yet it is to get up the other hill, to be admitted into heaven when all is done, so high, that Christ says it is not his to give, *St. Mat.* xx. 23. the Father hath reserved it to himself; and there is nothing higher situated than it. The very name of hill the Phrase of the Text sufficiently shews if it be a priviledge it is a high one; Hills are the highest places of the earth; the Church is a *beacon upon a hill*, every true Disciple a light there at least; The Houses of God used to be thought high places too, and so had in honour. And for Heaven 'tis stil'd the *everlasting hills*. So to be admitted to the priviledge of any of them must needs be a high one.

3. *High* and *holy* too, that's a *third* addition to the Priviledge. Many high Priviledges that are not *so*. Holy is the highest, most like to the most High. To be Saints, to be called to holiness, as *St. Paul* say we are; to be a holy Nation, as *St. Peter* says, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. to be Priests, as you heard before; to have holiness engraved upon our foreheads is to be holy persons, every Pot in *Hiernsalem* to be *holiness to the Lord*, *Zech.* xiv. 21. is a priviledge, and a holy one too.

To go up like Saints to the hill of *Sion*, to keep holy-day there, to worship before the holy Altars of the Lord of Hosts, to drink and eat in holy vessels, to be part of his holy portion, to be made partakers of his holy Word, and there praise the God of holiness in his holy Congregation, is a holy honour that is done us. The highest Priviledge that wants this, the highest Palace that is without this is but the Tents of ungodliness, and they, says *David*, will but make us afraid. Let my Priviledge, O God, be holy, or I care for none; that's that must bring me to his holy hill, and to his dwelling; that hill in which he dwells amidst *Che-rubims*, and *Seraphims*, and all his Host. Whither thirdly to ascend is the height of the holy Priviledge.

3. His holy heaven, that's the stile, the Holy of Holies *St. Paul* calls it, the very Seat of the most holy God, and holy Angels, and holy Saints. It cannot there sure be suspected to be the holy Priviledge, and the Priviledge of the holy only to come thither.

4. This holiness must needs make it to be *admired* too. An admirable Priviledge we told you it was 'tis our *fourth* Point now. And *David*, as if he had been all this while in a kind of swoon at the contemplation of

of it, breaks out now upon a sudden, with a Who is he? and what a thing is this to ascend into the Hill of the Lord, and to rise up in his holy place.

Indeed, we cannot sufficiently admire it, that God should raise up dust and ashes to such a height, as to make it a coheir with Christ, as to make a Hill and holy Place of it for himself to dwell in? *Isa. 66.* says the *Apostle*, O the depth! Who can find it out? Who, who can reach it!

That he should pitch his place and dwell among us, give us free access, liberty to come and go unto him, to approach him when we will, speak to him what we will, eat and drink with him when we will too; what can be stranger? Who can wonder at it enough? How terrible is this place! it put poor *Jacob* into a cold sweat to think of it before 'twas built, *Gen. xxviii. 17.* Will the Lord dwell on earth? Is it true, says *Solomon*, Can it be so? Lord, What am I, says *Holy David*, and my people, that we should but offer to it? Lord, What is it, that we should be allow'd to touch so holy ground with our unhallowed feet, look upon so holy a sight with our unholy eyes, that such a *glo-worm* as Man should be set upon a Hill?

But above all (3.) Lord what is man, Lord what is man that thou should'st so regard him as to advance him also into the holy Hill of Heaven too, Lord, what can we say, what can we say? Shall corruption inherit incorruption, dust, Heaven; a worm creep so high; What? he that lost it for an Apple, come thither after all; he in whom dwelleth no good thing, be let stay there where none but good, and all good things are? He that is not worth the Earth, worth nought but Hell, be admitted Heaven? Lord, What is Man, or rather, what art Thou O Lord! how wonderful in mercies that thus priviledg'st the sons of men! Admirable it is, worth the whole course of your days to admire it in, and you can never enough. It will appear yet the more by the glory that accompanies it. It is a *glorious priviledge* indeed, even admirable for its glory.

Even in all the senses we take the words, 'tis (5.) a *Glorious Priviledge*. Glorious to be Sains, they are heirs of Glory. Glorious to be Saints in Churches; for the Angels that are there *1 Cor. xi. 10.* to wait upon us and carry up our Prayers, for the beauty of holiness that is seated there, for the God of Glory whose presence is more glorious there. But it is without comparison to be Saints in Glory. Grace is the portion of Saints, that's one ray of Glory. The Church, the House of God is the Gate of Heaven, *Gen. xxviii. 17.* that's the entrance into Glory. What then is Heaven it self? What is it to enter there into the very Throne of the King of Glory? Lift up your heads O ye Gates, lift up your heads, and let us poor things in to see the King of Glory; the Hill of the Lord can be no other then a Hill of Glory. His holy place is no less than the very place and seat of Glory.

And being such, you cannot imagine it (6.) but *hard to come by*, the very petty glories of the World are so. This is a *Hill* of Glory, hard to climb, difficult to ascend, craggy to pass up, steep to clamber, no plain campagnia to it, the broad easie way leads some whether else. *St. Mat. vii. 13.* the way to this is narrow, *ver. 14.* 'tis rough and troublesome.

To be of the number of Christs true faithful servants is no slight work: 'tis a fight, 'tis a race, 'tis a continual warfare, fastings and watchings, and cold, and nakedness, and hunger, and thirst, bands, imprisonments, dangers and distresses, ignominy and reproach, afflictions and perfe-

persecutions, the worlds hatred and our friends neglect, all that we call hard or difficult is to be found in the way we are to go. A man cannot leave a lust, shake off bad company, quit a course of sin, enter upon a way of vertue, profess his Religion, or stand to it, cannot ascend the spiritual Hill, but he will meet some or other of these to contest and strive with. But not only to ascend but to stand there, as the word signifies, to continue at so high a pitch, to be constant in Truth and Piety, that will be hard indeed, and bring more difficulties to contrast with. And yet to rise up (to keep to that Translation) that is, to rise up in the defence of holy ways, of our Religion, is harder still; to bloud it may come at last, but to sweat it comes presently, cold and hot sweats too, fears and travels, that's the least to be expected.

Nor is it easie, as it often proves, to gain places to serve God in. Temples are long in building, that of *Hierusalem* 64 years together. Great preparation there was by *David* and *Solomon* to that before, and no little to the rearing of the Tabernacle. It was 300 years and upward that Christianity was in the World before the Christians could get the priviledges of Sanctuaries and Churches. The more ought we sure to value them, that we come so hardly by them. We would make more of the priviledge, if we considered what pains and cost, and time they cost, how unhandson Religion looks without them, how hard it is to perform many of the holy offices where we want them, how hard it would be to keep Religion in the minds of men, if all our Churches should be made nests of Owls and Dragons, and beds of Nettles and Thistles. Yet I confess, it is hard too to enter into those holy places with the reverence that becomes them, to rise up holy there. Every one that comes into the Church, does not ascend, he leaves his soul too oft below, comes but in part; his body that gets up the Hill, the mind lies grovelling in the Valley, amongst his Grounds and Cattel. Nor may every one be said to rise up or stand in his holy place, that stand or sits there in it, unless his thoughts rise there, unless his attention stands erect and stedfast up to Heaven when he is there: he is indeed in the place, but he unhallows it; it is no longer holy in respect of him. He must ascend in heart and soul, raise up eyes and hands, voice and attention too, that can be properly said to ascend into the Hill of the Lord, or rise up in his holy place. Which how hard it is, the very stragling of our own thoughts there will tell us; we need not go to the Prophet to find a people that sit there as if they were Gods people, and yet are not; that hear his Word and stand not to it; that raise up their voices, and yet their hearts are still beneath: We can furnish our selves with a number too great of such, enow to tell us how hard it is to ascend into the Hill of the Lord, and rise up in his holy place, so few do it.

And if these two ascensions be so hard, what's the third? the very righteous are scarcely sav'd, 1 *Pet.* iv. 18. If by any means I may, says *St. Paul*, 1 *Cor.* ix. 27. supposes he may not; he is afraid, at least, after all his Preaching, he should become a cast-away, fall short of the goal, miss the Crown, come short of the top of the Hill, of the holy Place. So hard a thing is Heaven; so clogg'd are the wings of our soul, so heavy and droffie are our spirits, and our earth so earthy, that it is hard to ascend so high. We feel we find it; and they but deceive themselves that think 'tis but a running leap into Heaven, a business to be done wholly or easily upon our Death-beds, when we can nor stir; nor raise up our selves, or our heads. Who shall ascend? Whatever question it is, it is most certainly

tainly an assertion of difficulty. Who shall ascend? no man can read it, but he will read hardness in the ascending.

And yet it would be harder but for the last consideration of the words, that 'tis a kind of admiration of the Prophets at the foresight of Christs Ascension, He in his spirit foresaw his *Saviour* climb this Hill, and wonder'd at it. From his ascending some of the difficulty is abated. He has led the way, trac'd a path, open'd a door into Heaven unto all Believers; so we us'd to sing in the *Te Deum*. I need not tell you he has ascended in all the senses of the words, no *height of holiness* but he has, none frequenter in the *Temple* than he was, none in *Heaven* till he came thither: He the first that made our dull earth ascend so high. He rose and ascended up on high without the least help of metaphor or figure, rose from the Grave, ascended into the Hill, ascended thence into the Hill of the Lord, stands there at his right hand, St. Stephen saw him so, *Acts* vii. 53. Never said *Prophet* any thing that more punctually fell out than this, he may well admire it, and so may we.

Yea, and praise him too. To him we owe all our *Ascensions*, all the height and ascensions of our spirits in grace and goodness, all our *privileges* to worship him in holy places, all our assurances and *hopes* of Heaven, and the possession of it. His rising raises us, his ascending makes us ascend. He the only prime singular one, we only as parts and members of him.

What is then left us to do? What for all this privilege? Why? if Christs grace, and Gods Worship, and Heaven it self be such privileges, I hope we will not be so silly to forgo them, or betray them. Seeing they be so high ones, we cannot be so unworthy now to do any thing beneath them, any base or unworthy thing. Being holy ones too, we will not be so profane to pollute our selves or them with lusts and sacrileges. Being so admirable privileges all we cannot certainly but adore Gods mercy in them. Being glorious ones too, we must glorifie him for them, count all things dross and dung in comparison of them. Being yet hard to come by, the more need we have to labour for them, set all our powers, make it all our work to get them, to get grace and worship, and glory, to ascend the hill and holy place with all holiness as the way to glory. In a word, seeing all this privilege comes by Christ, 'tis him we are to thank and serve, and worship upon his own hill, and in his own holy place, till the time come till we ascend in glory. And yet there is something more behind, the way to this hill, the conditions required to obtain this privilege, what we are to perform, that we may attain it. To have *clean hands*, and *pure hearts*, *minds not lift up to vanity*, and *mouths that will not swear to deceive* our neighbour. For he only shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, he only shall rise up in his holy place; he only is a true Believer, he only truly worships God, when he comes to Church to worship, he only shall go to Heaven, that hath clean hands, &c.

THE FIRST SERMON UPON Whitsunday.

St. JOHN iii. 8.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit.



*He wind bloweth. And this day it blew to purpose. A mighty rushing wind there was that this day fill'd the House where the Disciples were assembled, Acts ii. 2. And it blew truly where it listeth when it blew only in that Chamber where they were. And the sound of it was heard sufficiently when Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, in Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphilia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia, about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, all of them this day heard it fram'd into articulate voices, into Tongues as many and divers as the Countries they came from. Yet could not any of them tell whence this wind blew, whence these sounds came, for they were all amazed, and in doubt, saying one to another, *What meaneth this?* ver. 12. Nor could the Disciples themselves but in general, that from heaven it came, nor whither it went when it retired from them.*

This Day then was this Text fulfilled in your ears, O happy Disciples! Nicodemus might to day by experiment understand what in this Chapter he could not apprehend, the *wind* and *Spirit* both together; and feel the workings of them both; there both in one descent together, though here he did not when they were put in one word together; where whether *Spiritus Ventus*, or *Spiritus Spiritus*, both *verbuum*, were understood *Expositors* have disputed, and it stands yet upon the question. The *Ancients* restrained the words to the holy *spirit*, and translate it *Spiritus*. The *Modern* Expositors to the *wind*, and translate it *Ventus*.

To do both right we shall joyn both senses, understand the words as a similitude made by our blessed Saviour to instruct both Nicodemus and us in the ways of the *spirit*, and in the knowledge of the spiritual Regeneration by the likeness of the *wind*. So

So two *Simile's* there will be in the *Text*. *Sicut Ventus sic Spiritus*, and *Sicut spiritus sic spiritualis*.

The *First* Similitude is between the *wind* and the *Spirit*.

The *Second* between the *Spirit* and the *spiritual* man, or him that is born of the *Spirit*.

In the similitude betwixt the *wind* and the *Spirit*, we shall observe,

- I. The *Nature* of them both in *πνεῦμα*, *breath*, or *Wind*, or *Spirit*, it signifies them all.
- II. The *Power* and *Operation* both of the one and of the other, they blow both of them where they list.
- III. The *Plainness* of their sounds; Thou hearest the sound thereof; both of them easie enough to be heard.
- IV. The *Obscurity* yet of both their *Motions*, ye know of neither of them whence they come, or whither they go.

According to these *four* points will the *second* similitude be extended too. He that is born of the *Spirit* will be like the *Spirit* in all four. In his *Nature*, in his *Operations*, in his *Plainness* in some particulars, and his *Obscurity* in others. *So is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

But to tell you fully the true Condition of him that is *born* of the *Spirit*, I must tell you first the *Nature*, the *Operations*, and the *Properties* of the *Spirit*. And to tell you the *Nature*, the *Operations*, and the *Properties* of the *Spirit* I must shew you also those of the *wind*; that so by the more perfect discovery of them we may the more perfectly admire them, and adore and magnifie him to day who this day gave us both the occasion and means to hear and understand them.

I begin now to compare the *Nature* of the *wind* and *Spirit*. *πνεῦμα* the word is and may be translated both. It is so in the *Text*. Some are for *Ventus*, some for *Spiritus*: *Breath* they are both. The one, the *breath* of *heaven*; the other, of the *air*: The one, *Gods*; the other, the *Worlds*.

Indeed, the *wind* is a kind of *breath* or *spirit*, but a *spirit* in the nicest and subtlest sense it is not. A *body* it is, and not a *spirit*; yet the nighest thing it is we have to liken the *spirit* to, as near a *simile* as we can find for it; but the *Spirit* of the *Day*, is so a *spirit* as in *no* sort a *body*. *τὸ πνεῦμα* with an *Article* and an *Emphasis*, a *Spirit* above all *Spirits*, the prime *Spirit*. A *Spirit* by *Essence*, an essential *Spirit*, or essentially a *Spirit*. A *Spirit* by *Procession*, the *Spirit* proceeding: *personally* that *Spirit* which *proceedeth from the Father*, St. *John* xv. 26. and *from the Son*, St. *John* xvi. 7. which was this *Day* breath'd first of all solemnly into the *World* to quicken it to a heavenly life. *Spiritus Dei*, and *Spiritus Deus*, the *Spirit* of *God*, and the *Spirit* which is *God*, and the only *Spirit* that can bring us all to *God*.

But this great *Nature* is too great to comprehend, too infinite to pursue. Nor can the *Simile* reach it. It falls short, and so must I and you when we have done our utmost. 'Tis an easier Project for us both to fall upon the *Power* and *Operations* of it, though I foresee we shall often there be at a stand too. Yet, to help our selves as well as we can, we will consider the *Operations*; first by *themselves*, then by their *Effects*, and then thirdly by their *Course* and *Compass*. By *themselves* first.

II. The *wind*, you hear, *blows*, and so the *Spirit* *blows*. Yet the *Spirit* is not, *blows* not neither like every *wind*. There are whirlwinds that make a horrid noise, that whirl every way about, and turn the *World* up topsie turvy, upside down; the *wind* that is but *Spiritus*, a direct and orderly

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breathing does not so. *Spiritus vertiginis* is but *Vertigo Spiritus*, the spirit of giddiness that the Prophet speaks of, *Isa. xix. 14.* is but the *Vertigo*, or turning of the brain, an abuse of the name, not a spirit, but a meer humour that makes us giddy; has made this Nation so too long.

2. Blustering, and stormy winds there are, *ἀνεμοί* rather than *πνεύματα*, *Graves violento flamine venti*, but *this* no such. *Spiritus* rather than *Ventus* ours is here; a calm and peaceable one, a breath rather than a wind, a Spirit proceeding from the God of peace, bequeathed and sent us by the Prince of peace; so still and even, that it did not so much as disorder a wreath of that holy flame, which this day encircled the heads of the Disciples, but let that heavenly fire sit quietly upon them, *Acts ii. 3.*

3. Nor is it of this wind to which this Spirit is compared, said *flat* here, but *spirat*, not said to blow by a word that signifies commonly only the ordinary and natural blowing. All is supernatural here. 'Tis neither *whirling*, we told you first, nor *blustering*, we said secondly, nor *puffing* wind we tell you now; 'tis a meek, an humble Spirit; from the beginning it mov'd upon the waters, *Gen. 1.* but did not swell them into waves or billows, as natural winds commonly do, nor does it now; but only guides all our waters, passions, and motions into their proper place with sweetness and order; which is meerly a supernatural work.

4. And yet as soft and smooth as it blows, it is the *Spirit of Power*, a *mighty wind*, *Acts ii. 2.* and rush in it does oft times at first with a little sudden, and eager violence; yet two syllables, one single *flat*, and all is done; strange things we know are done by a very little wind, and that one word of this one Spirit made the World out of nothing, and can as easily make a nothing of the World. He can remove the greatest rocks and mountains not only with the breath of his displeasure, but of his pleasure too, his easiest breath. He blew the Gods of the Heathen out of their Thrones, and spake all their *Oracles* dumb, blew all their spirits in a moment thence, and yet the voice of his breathing was scarce heard. He does so still, throws down all the *Holds* and *Fortresses* of the devil in us *sine strepitu* without noise. Some rushing mighty wind sometimes may go before it to rouse our dulness and awake us, but the spirit is not *there*. Some Earthquake of servile fear may shake us first, and affright us from some ill action, but the Spirit is not *there*. Some fire or fiery trial may first burn or scorch us, and thereby make us look about us, or some kinder fire warm us into a better temper than formerly we were in, but the Spirit is not *there* neither. But when these outward dispensations have sufficiently disposed us to attention then comes the *still small voice*, *1 Kings xix. 12.* and *there's* the Spirit that silently glides into our souls as the small dew into a fleece of wool. Such a still, smooth, sweet breath of wind is the true resemblance of the Spirit, and when this comes it works wonders; that minds me of the next Particular, the *Effects* of both the *wind* and *Spirit*.

Two especial effects the *wind* has: To *purifie*, and to *refresh*. These are the prime Effects of the *Spirit* too.

1. When the holy *Spirit* enters into the heart it purifies and cleanses it from all pollution. This made *David* pray, *Psal. li. 10.* *Create in me, O Lord, a clean heart.* Yea, but how? O blessed Prophet; why, as it follows, *by renewing a right spirit within me.* That's the way to make him clean. No way but *that*, but *that* will. For the Spirit is compar'd to fire, *Acts ii. 3.* and *that* purifies. To water, *St. John iv. 10.* and *that* cleanses. And here

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to wind, and that blows away all the chaff and dust that is either in us or about us.

(2.) This Spirit refreshes, too. It renews the face of the Earth, Psal. civ. 30. It giveth rest and quiet, Isai. lxiii. 14. It upholds and establishes the faint and decaying spirit, Psal. li. 12. It refreshes us in our Bonds, and sets us free, Rom. viii. 15. It comforts us in all distresses, for he is ὁ παραινιστής, the Comforter that should come into the world, St. John xiv. 26.

(3.) Nay I may add one thing more. It not only refreshes us when we are faint and weary, and almost dying, but it revives us even when we are dead, is a quickning Spirit, St. John vi. 63. Like that wind the Naturalist tells us of, which in the Spring time quickens the dull dead Earth into Herbs and Flowers. Such a wind is this Spirit, that gives life to every one that comes into the world; for he is the Spirit of Life, Rom. viii. 2.

But that which adds somewhat still to the fuller glory of these effects, and must not be pass'd without a note, is, that 'tis Spirit still, this wind blows still. For however the winds are not always in a noise and bustle, yet some spirit of air there is that moves in the deepest stillness. Spiritus there is always, though not ventus; some tender breeze, though no gale of wind, there is always stirring. And if there were not continually some such sweet breathings of the Holy Spirit upon us, when those strong and louder blasts seem to be lull'd asleep; we were but dead men, and might sleep for ever, but such there are, and we live by them.

I might, but I will not add any more to the Effects either of the Wind, or of the Spirit. I pass on to their Course and Compass, to shew you how far their effects and powers reach. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and the Spirit where he willeth.

And here I must tell you, ὅπου θέλει, *Ubi vult* is a large circuit. *Ubi* is where, and *Ubi* is when, and *Vult* is what you will, especially when 'tis *his* who worketh all things according to the counsel of his Will, Ephes. i. 11. So that 'twill be no stretching to say either of the Wind, or of the Spirit, that it bloweth (1.) where it lists, and (2.) How it lists, and (3.) As much as it lists, and (4.) On whom it lists, and (5.) when it lists.

(1.) The wind blows where it lists, on this side, or on that side, or on any side, any where, and every where. The Spirit does so too, only with more propriety to *Ubi vult*, doing out of the liberty of its own will, what the wind only does out of the subtilty of its nature. No place lies exempted from the power of his will. It finds St. Paul and Silas in the prison, and blows up the organs of their voices into Songs and Hymns. It finds Manasses in the dungeon, blows there with his wind, and the waters flow out of his eyes. It finds St. Matthew at the receipt of Custom, and blows him out of a Publican into an Apostle. It blows St. Peter and St. Andrew out of their Boat to the stern of the Church of Christ. He blows upon some in their journey, as upon St. Paul, upon others at home, as upon Cornelius; upon one in the bed, upon another at the Mill, upon Jonas in the Whales belly. No place beyond his compass, not the Isles of the Gentiles, not the land of Uz, not the Deserts of Arabia. Here and there even amongst them, he blows some into his Kingdom. In a word, no chamber so secret, but it can get into; no place so remote, but it can reach; none so private, but it can find; none so strong, but it can break through; none so deep, but it can fathom; none so high, but it can scale; no place at all, but it can come into; and none so bad,

but some way or other it will vouchsafe to visit. It makes Holy David, cry out as in an extasie, *Psal. cxxxix. 6. whither shall I go then from thy Spirit? or, whether shall I go then from thy Presence? If I climb up into Heaven, thou art there; if I go down to Hell, thou art there also. If I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the earth, even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.* No place, it seems, in Heaven or Earth, or Sea, or Hell it self, can hold him out.

Nor can any hold him to this or that way of working neither: for He bloweth (2.) *How he lifts*; sometimes louder, sometimes softer, sometimes after this manner, sometimes after that. He raises new inclinations, or he cherishes the old; He changes the tempers of men, or disposes them; He removes opportunities of doing ill, or he propounds opportunities of doing good; he scares us with threats, or allures us with promises; he drives us with judgments, or he draws us with mercies; he inflames us within, or he moves us from without, which way soever it pleases him. No wind so various in its blowing. Different ways he has to deal with divers men; and *diversities of gifts* he has for them too, *differences of Administrations, diversities of Operations*, 1 Cor. xii. 5. To one he gives the *word of wisdom*, to another the *word of knowledge*, to another *faith*, to another the *gift of healing*, to another the *working of miracles*, to another *prophecie*, to another *discerning of spirits*, to another *divers kinds of tongues*, to another the *interpretation of tongues*, all from the Spirit, says the *Apostle*, in the fore-cited Chapter. Nor was this only for those times. He still breaths diversities of gifts and graces, as he pleases. On some sanctifying graces, on others edifying. On others both. To some he gives a cheerful, to others a sad spirit: to some a kind of holy lightness; to others a religious gravity; to one a power wholly to quit the World, to another power to stand holy in it; to one an ability to rule, to another a readiness to obey; to one courage, to another patience, to a third temperance, and so to others other graces, as he thinks fittest.

(3.) Yet of these gifts, to some more, to some less, not to all alike; nay, not to the same person always alike neither, but (3.) as much only as this Spirit will. All have not faith alike nor hope alike, nor charity alike, nor courage alike, nor patience alike; neither all virtues, nor any virtues all alike. Upon some the *abundance* of the Spirit dwells, upon others he breaths only. Some have had extasies, others but only moderate breathings. *Elijah* had abundance of the Spirit, yet *Elisba* has it doubled, 2 Kings ii. 9. And yet this very same *Elisba*, that presently upon it divides *Jordan* with the wind of a Mantle, and restores waters to their sweetness, and earth to its fruitfulness by a cruse of Salt, 2 Kings ii. 21. in but the very next Chapter cannot so much as prophesie without a *Minstrel*, ver. 15. is not so much as in a disposition to receive this divine Spirit, without the help of an Instrument of Musick to rally his spirits into harmony and order. *St. Paul* who was but even now caught up into the *third Heavens*, 2 Cor. xii. 1. feels by and by such a thorn in the flesh, ver. 7. that of all that great extraordinary proportion, he has no more left him than a poor pittance, a mere sufficiency, ver. 9.

(4.) And the Person is as much in his own power as the measure is. He blows not only what, but upon whom he will. He is no mans debtor, Rom. xi. 35. He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, Rom. ix. 18. What? if He to shew his justice, will no longer breath upon some persons

persons who have so long despised his mercy, and yet to make known the riches of his glory, will yet breath somewhat longer upon others, that for ought we know, may have deserv'd as little, Who can complain seeing he blows sufficiently upon all, and is not obliged either in justice or mercy to do more, but justly may do all, where or upon whom he will.

One *ubi* there is behind. He is free also for his own time; for he (5.) bloweth *when* he listeth. Upon some in the *womb*, as upon St. John Baptist; upon others in the *Cradle*; upon some in their *child-hood*, upon others in their *youth*, upon others not till *gray-hairs* cover them. In the morning, at the third, the sixth, the ninth hour, in the evening, in the still of night, in our sleep, and when we are awake, are all his times as he pleases to make them, or dispose them. In prosperity, in adversity, in the midst of tears, or in the midst of smiles, in health, in sickness, whensoever it pleases him. He call'd *Samuel* in his childhood, *David* in his youth, *St. Paul* in his manhood, *Manasses* in his age, and that which without contradiction shews the unlimittedness of his power, the *Thief* upon the Cross.

I shall dismiss this Point, if you please, to take home with you these *Corollaries* or *Lessons* hence.

(1.) If the Spirit bloweth *where* it listeth. We are not certainly to exclude any place, or Nation, from these blessed gales, or with the *Dona-*
gists to confine him to any corner of the world, or to the *Church* or *Congregation* we are of, as if he could blow no where else. Learn *Char-*
ity.

(2.) If the Spirit bloweth *How* he listeth. We do but shew our folly to prescribe *him* his way. He knows what best he has to do, how best to manage us to Salvation. Learn *Discretion*.

(3.) If it be as *much* too only as he lists. 'Tis not sure our merit or desert if we have more of him than others, nor perhaps their demerit always who have less. Whatever it is, 'tis more than we deserve, both they and we. Let that suffice to humble us, and make us thankful. Learn *Humility*.

(4.) If it be only upon *whom* he pleases, 'Tis certainly sometimes upon some we know not. So we have no reason to pass a censure upon any mans soul. Learn to *think well* of all.

And so much the rather in that (5.) he bloweth *when* he will. If he has not already, he may hereafter breath upon him or her thou doubttest most. If thou perhaps thy self feel'st him not within thee now, thou may'st ere long. Learn hence, to despair neither of thy *self* nor *any one else*.

In a word, seeing all his actions are so free, all his blessings, and all the ways of them so wholly in his own breast. Let us all resign up all our wills to his, and submit them wholly to his pleasure for time and place and manner and measure, and bid him do with us what he pleases.

Yet for all this, Would we not now willingly know somewhat of these mysterious and stupendous operations? There is somewhat, I confess, towards it in the next Point, and I shall shew you it, that though you cannot perfectly discern the motions of the Spirit, you may yet hear the sound thereof; that's the *third* General of the *Text*, the *plainness* of the *sound*, both of the *wind* and of the *spirit*, easie enough both of them to be heard. *And thou hearest the sound thereof.*

III. For

III. For the *wind*, I need not tell you it, it speaks loud enough sometimes to wake the drowsiest sleeper; though we cannot see it, we can hear it. And so we may the *Spirit* too, as invisible as he is. Now two sounds there are of the *Spirit*, An *Outward* and an *Inward*.

They that heard the *Patriarchs*, the *Prophets* and *Apostles* preach, they heard the outward; so in *St. Stevens* case the *Jews* are said to resist the *Spirit by which he spake*, *Acts vi. 10*. They that now hear them read or preach, they still hear the sound of the *Spirit*. For so *Christ* tells us, It is not they, the *Prophets* and the *Apostles* that speak, but the *Spirit that speaketh in them*, *St. Matth. x. 20*.

The *inward* sound of the *Spirit* is to be heard too. When thou perceivest pious and godly motions rise within thee, when at any time good desires come upon thee, when holy resolutions spring up within thy bosom, when thou feelest thy soul overspread with heavenly light, and the divine truth preaching to thine understanding, then thou hearest the inward sound, then this Holy *Spirit* begins to discourse and converse with thee. And truly though none of these be properly sounds, but only *metaphorical*, yet they are plain expressions of the *Spirit*, and may well go for the sounds of it to discern it by. Yet that you may not mistake false sounds for true ones; if you recollect what has been spoken scatteredly already in the discourse of the *Nature, Operations and Effects* of the *Spirit*, you will easily find the true ones to be these.

If the motion that at any time within us be pure and heavenly, calm and gentle, if it purifie our hearts, if it cleanse our affections, if it penetrate the bones and marrow, if it cool the feavers of our lusts, if it blow out the coals of our wrath, if it blow down the fortresses of sin, if it blow up good resolutions, if it blow away the dust that hangs too often upon our good actions, the interests and by respects, if it refresh the wounded spirit, if it warm us with holy flames, if it quicken us to all obedience to God and Man, if it cause the fruits of the *Spirit*, the *Apostle* speaks of, *Gal. v.* to bud up in us, then 'tis doubtless from this *Spirit*, and they are all as so many several kinds of sounds that loudly speak his being and breathing in us. Whatever motion, sound, or language is not consonant to one or other of these, let men talk of the *Spirit* what they will, they are not of the *Spirit* in the *Text*, nor does it make them spiritual men that have it.

Thus far our *knowledge* of the *Spirit* extends, these are the sounds it makes within and without us. But our *ignorance* of it extends further. More of it there is that we know not, than that we know; for notwithstanding all this deciphering of the nature, effects, and sound of the *wind* or *Spirit*. The *Obscurity* of the course it takes, and the *Motion* it moves in is far greater, for thou canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. Nor *wind* nor *spirit*.

IV. For the *wind* first; They are but general notions we entertain of it. *God brings the winds out of his treasure*, says the *Psalmist*, *cxxv. 7*. Out of those hidden chambers they come, but where those chambers are we cannot tell. On a suddain they arise, ere we are aware, and away they go; and who can follow them? Who can trace their steps, or track their way, or over-take them in their lodging at night, or tell us where it is?

Ask

Ask *Philosophy*, and let that answer you. *whence* is it that the winds arise? It answers you, from a thin and airy vapour drawn up out of the earth towards the middle Region of the Air, but repercuss'd or beaten back by the grossness of some intervening cloud which drives it down obliquely with that violence we hear and feel. This, or something as obscure, is all the knowledge we can get of it. For ask now where that vapour rose? It cannot tell. Which way it went? It know sit not. In what part of heaven it first became a wind? It cannot point it out. What is become of it now 'tis gone? It resolves you not. Into what part of the world it is retir'd when all is still? It cannot answer you.

We use to say, from the *East*, or from the *West*, from the *North*, or from the *South*, yet so uncertain must we needs confess the first point of their motion, and so many points do they vary ere they come at us, and so quickly are they gone by us, that the wisest of us all cannot tell exactly either whence they were, or whither they will.

But yet again, if it be no more than such a kind of wind as is in the *Text*, not *Ventus* but *Spiritus*, a meer breath of wind or air; that undoubtedly we know not whence it comes, or whither it goes.

And yet the ways of the *Spirit* are more unsearchable: We know not any thing at all of his eternal *Procession*, it was before any time we can imagine; We know nothing of his course or motion all that infinite while before the World began. We understand nothing distinctly of it ever since. His motions are so intricate, so various, and so infinite we cannot comprehend them. The dispositions, the gifts, the graces he works daily in us we know not how they rise, or how they spread, or how they vanish. Descend we a little to particulars.

We are sometimes mov'd, we feel, by the words of the *Preacher*, by the reading of a Chapter, by a devout Book, or a godly Story, and yet we know not why more now than at another time; why at this time by a little touch, and not before by long persuasions; why sometimes by weak and slender, at other times not by any means; why to vertue oft-times contrary to our former natures and dispositions without any occasion given, all sensible interests and motives clear against it, whilst to another more easie and kindly to us we cannot be wrought. Nor know we what becomes of any of those holy motions when they depart, or we thrust them from us.

But if we should go about to dive into those hidden secrets of his Counsel, why he should blow upon us, and not upon others as good as we; why upon the *Jews* so fully, upon all the world besides so sparingly; why he should take this *woman* from the *Mill*, and not the other that works by her; why of two in the same bed he should refuse the one, and choose the other; why he should by the same words and motions to two several men of the same tempers and education, and at that time, as near as can be conjectured, in the same way and disposition breath effectually upon the one, and not the other, save this man presently, and leave the other to himself; we are here wholly at a loss, they are mysteries of which we can say neither whence it is, nor whither it tends, but only to the glory of his grace, and because it so pleases thee O *blessed Spirit*.

And seeing now we have told you all we can of *Sic Spiritus*, of the first similitude, the similitude betwixt the Wind and the Spirit, let's now see what we can make of *Sic Spiritu natus*, of the second similitude betwixt the *Spirit*, and every one that is born of it. So is every, &c.

II. General.

II. General. That He that is born of the *Spirit* should be some way like it, is no wonder, because he that is begotten may well be like him him that begets, he that is born like her that bore him. But how he comes either to be so begotten or born, or be so like, *that* may easily put us to a stand, yet *that* too will come in as one part of the similitude. For four Points of likeness we shall observe between the *Spirit* and *him* that is born of it, as we did before between the Wind and the Spirit it self. Like they are in their *Natures*, in their *Operations*, in their *Sounds*, and in their *Motions*, in the *Evidence* of those, and the *Obscurity* of these.

1. They are like in *Nature* first. The Spirit spiritual and heavenly, and so is he that is born of it. He breaths nothing but heaven, speaks nothing else, lives there, his Conversation wholly there, *Phil. iii. 20.* his affections all upon things above, his fashion not according to this World at all; his face, his eyes, his hands, his feet, his ways look thither all. He is so like him that he is now perfectly another thing than what he was before, new soul, new understanding, new will, new affections, new all, body and all; *that* fram'd into new obedience, quickened to a new life, a meer new creature, every way; nothing of earth or flesh, but all Spirit now. You shall see the likeness of his nature plainer in the second Resemblance, the likeness of his *Actions* and *Operations* to those of the *Spirit*.

2. The Operations of the *Spirit* we told you, (1.) were calm, and peaceable, and so are His who is born of the Spirit. Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, these are the fruits of the Spirit, *Gal. v. 22.* and he that has the Spirit, has all these: He that has not, is none of his.

The Effects (2.) of the *Spirit* are purifying, refreshing, and quickning. And he that has this Spirit, as well as he that has this hope the Apostle speaks of, (1.) *purifies himself from all uncleanness both of flesh and Spirit.* Then (2.) refreshes and comforts others, all that need it. And (3.) brings forth also all good fruits, is fruitful in good works; they mistake sadly that think themselves or others spiritual men without them.

And yet the strangest Operation is behind. *The Spirit bloweth where it listeth.* And can we make the Spirit and spiritual man agree here too? Let's try a little. Two things there are in it: A power and a liberty of blowing. 'Tis evident there must be power to do any thing every where, and as evident there must be liberty to do every thing any where. And both in power and liberty we shall find them like; and first in power.

The *Spirit* is a Spirit of power, he that is born of it is a man of power. An host of men cannot so much as make him affraid, *Psal. xxvii. 2.* Sin it self cannot overcome him; He that is born of the *Spirit* he sinneth not, *1 John v. 18.* He is able, with *Simeon*, to break all the cords of it, to smite all such *Philistims* before him, when this Spirit comes upon him. Nor Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature can overcome him, *Rom. viii. 38.* Over all these he is more than Conquerour. Those things which before we were regenerate seem'd impossible, when we are once born again are light and easie; we can do any thing then through his Spirit that dwelleth in us. Stablish us once with this free Spirit, and 'tis not cold or nakedness, hunger or thirst, wearisome journeys, or dangerous shipwracks, stripes, or imprisonments, racks, or gibbets,

gibbets, fire or faggot, that can force us from our hold, or over-power us. This very Spirit upholds us in all our pains, and at length blows away every thing that troubles or offends us.

Nor is this Spirit only a Spirit of Power, but (2.) of Liberty also, and where the Spirit is, there there is Liberty, says St. Paul, 2 Cor. 3. 17. that is, he that has it, is free too. Free he is (1.) from the bondage of Moses Law, redeem'd from under that, Gal. iv. 5, 6. Free (2.) though not from the Obligations, yet from the Rigours of the Moral Law, Gal. iii. 13. Rom. vii. 6. Free (3.) from Sin, made free from that, Rom. vi. 18. from the Dominion of it. Free (4.) from the Captivity of the Devil, recovered out of his snares, 2 Tim. ii. 26. Free, lastly, from the Dominion of Death, the sting of it is lost, the victory of it gone, 1 Cor. xv. 55. So is every one free that is born of the Spirit. Well may now his fame go out into all the World, and his name into all the corners of the earth. And indeed, it does so in the next words, in the next Point of the similitude, *Thou hearest the sound thereof*. Evident it is, and evident it is to any, heard it may be, and any one may hear it, *Thou*, and *Thou*, and *Thou*, every *Thou* that will.

Evident it is first. The Spirit is not a fancy, nor are the Operations of it so neither. The Spirit though it cannot be seen it self, yet something there is of it that may be heard, heard, somewhat of it, by the hearing of the ear; the effects not always in the understanding only; these very ears we carry are oft refresh'd with the sound of it; our very senses sensible of the strength and power of it. And he that tells us of grace or Religion all within, of so serving God in the Spirit, that neither our own, nor other bodies, are the better for it, or shew any signs of it, has turn'd his Religion and Devotion into air and imagination, and not to Spirit. By his fruits you shall know as well the spiritual man, as the Prophet.

Nor has he, secondly, one peculiar ear-mark, one tone and canting Dialect to discern him by. He that is born of the Spirit is a free, and noble, and generous Spirit, uses a Language that every body may understand. 'Tis not the Mystery of the Spirit, but the Mystery of Iniquity that thus envelops it self in a private and affected Phrase, which sounds ('tis to be fear'd) the Spirit of Schism, Singularity, and Rebellion, and not of Love and Peace. And yet as plain a sound as the Spirits is, it is not lastly without some obscurity, but that is not of the sound; that's plain and open; but of the motion and course, of which we may have leave to be ignorant, and in many things can be no other. That's the last point wherein the Spirit and spiritual man are like. *Thou canst no more tell whence or whither those great things the regenerate man acts are, than whence the wind or Spirit comes, or whither it goes.*

4. But that so it is, the amazements and doubts that this Day possessed those who were the witnesses of the wonders of this days work, and their several judgments and conjectures concerning the Apostles this day filled with this holy Spirit will make it without question. Some said, *what meaneth this?* Others said *mocking, these men are full of new wine;* All were amazed and in doubt, Acts ii. 12, 13. The Apostles seem'd such strange things to them now, since the Holy Ghost had fallen upon them, that they knew not now what to make of them, or of any thing they did. In the progress afterward of their lives and courses, they were as little understood, as much misconstrued by the world. They were thought *fools and mad-men*, when most *wise and sober*, Acts xxvi. 24.

condemn'd for *wicked* when they were most *innocent*, reckon'd the *scum* and *off-scouring of the world*, 1 Cor. iv. 13. when they were the *Treasures* and *Jewels* of it; judg'd as *dying*, when *they only truly liv'd*; accounted *sorrowful*, yet were always *rejoycing*; esteemed *poor*, yet so far from being so, that they made many *rich*; thought to have *nothing*, and yet *possessed all things*, 2 Cor. vi. 9, 10. So it was then, so it always was, so it ever will be. The World *will* never, never *can* conceive the nature and way of him that is born of the Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 14. We know not what to make even of his *γεννημένος* in the *Text*, whether to read it born or begotten, for 'tis both; and how he should be both by the same Spirit, or how the same Spirit should be both Father and Mother to him, we cannot tell. How he is begotten by the Spirit; how he is new born; the ways of his birth, the ways of his life, the way of his death; how he is wrought, and form'd, and moulded out of his old, stiff, stubborn temper into mildness and softness; how the old man is mortified in all his members; how the new man rises and grows in all his parts; how he resists so many strong temptations; how he can so chearfully renounce the World, how he can so wholly deny himself, how he can so merrily pursue a troublesome and despised virtue, why he should do all this when there appears nothing but trouble, sorrow, and disadvantage by it, are all mysteries so obscure and dark, that night it self is mid-day to them. Nor is it less to see with what calmness and contentedness he passes hence through pains and tortures, nor can we conceive the glory and happiness that attends him. Thus is the spiritual *Heroe's* life and death a mystery, so far above the apprehension of dull-ey'd earth, that it knows no more of its course or motion than it does of the winds, neither *what* it is, nor *whence* it comes, nor *whither* it goes.

But after all these mysteries I end in plainness. 'Tis a *Day*, indeed, as well as a *Text* of mysteries and wonders, but both *Day*, and *Text*, and *Wind*, and *Spirit* will be all satisfied if they can leave these plain Lessons upon our Spirits.

That (1.) we now get us up with *Elijah*, 1 King. xix. 11. to the Mount of God, get us often up to his holy places to expect this holy wind and spirit. (2.) That there we wrap our faces in our *Mantles* as he did his in his, v. 13. cover them with all *reverence* and *humility* to receive him. That (3.) we go out with him too, and stand in the entry of our Caves, every one in his place ready to *worship* and *adore* him when he comes. That (4.) we there listen carefully to the sound he makes as he passes by, attentively to hear his voice, and know his will, and do his pleasure. That (5.) we take the *wings of the morning*, as holy *David* speaks, our earliest devotions and prayers to convey us to his presence, that he may blow and breath upon us, and we daily find and feel him purifying, quickning, and refreshing us, and every day more and more drawing nearer to us, or us nearer to himself. And then no matter whether we know whence he comes, or whither he goes, so he thus take us with him when he comes, and carry us thither with him when he goes where he eternally with the *Father* and the *Son* resides in glory.

Even so, O blessed and Eternal Spirit, blow upon us, and this day keep thy *Festival* among us for *Jesus Christ* his sake, to whom with the *Father* and thy *self* be all our wonder and admiration, all Worship and Adoration, all our praise and glory from this day for ever. *Amen.*

THE SECOND SERMON UPON Whitsunday.

St. JOHN xvi 13.

Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.



AND of such a *Spirit* never had the world more need than now, never more need of one to guide us into all truth then at this time, wherein we are pestered and surrounded all with Error, with all sorts of Error; never more need that the *Spirit of Truth* should come, to guide us, than now when there are so many spirits up and abroad, that men know not which to follow. *Come Holy Ghost Eternal God* never fitter to be sung than now.

For by the face of our Hemisphere, we may seem either to have lost him quite, or with those in *St. Peter*, we may ask, Where is the Promise of his coming? When he is come indeed, he will guide us into all truth, yea, but, when is that? When comes he?

Why? this day he came; this day was this *Scripture* fulfilled; this day this Promise made good, The Spirit of Truth came down from Heaven upon the *Apostles* this day; so that from this day forward they spake all tongues and truths, who before were both ignorant of the one, and could not bear many of the other.

Well, but the *Apostles* are dead, and all the *Disciples* that could pretend to those gifts and prerogatives are dead, and we neither speak with tongues by the spirit, nor understand all truths any of us, nor can yet hear of any that do; Is his Promise then utterly come to an end for evermore? Certainly either come he is not, or lead us he does not, or into Truth he does not, or into but a little, and that but very few of us; or we at this end of the world have no part or portion in his coming: something or other there is, some reason or other to be given why this Wind, this Spirit does not blow upon us.

That he is come, this day of *Pentecost* plainly tells us; that he is

come not to go again, Christs own promise that he should *abide with us for ever*, St. John xiv. 16. does assure us; that to us too it is he comes, though not visibly, as this day, yet invisibly every day, (which is as much for truth, though not for tongues) St. Peter tells us in his Sermon this day out of the Prophet Joel, that the *Spirit is to be poured upon all flesh*, Acts ii. 17. so upon ours too; and the Spirit for his part is always ready, ever and anon calling us to come, Rev. xxii. 17. So that the fault will lie upon our selves, not the Spirit, that he guides us not into all truth.

The truth is, men are not disposed as they should be. He that looks into their ways and pursuits after truth may see it without Spectacles. Other spirits are set up, new lights advanc'd, private spirits prefer'd, all the people are become leaders, every man thinks himself of age to answer for himself, and to guide himself, so that there is either no body to be guided, (all the Lords people being Kings and Priests, and Prophets) or else no body will be, but according to their own fancies prejudices, interests and humors. This is the true posture, the very face of Religion now adays, and the true reason that this Spirit of Truth ceases to guide them into truth: For, He leads none but those that will be led, and they will not. He is only sent to guide, not to hale them on, or drive them forward. To you Disciples, such as are willing to be taught, not to them that will be all Masters. To those that could not bear all truths then, not to those that would not then, nor to those that will not now, who make Christs promise of none effect to themselves by their own perverseness.

Time was (and this day it was) when He found men better disposed for his coming, found them together at their Prayers, not, as now, together by the ears; of one accord, not in Sects and Factions, waiting all for the Promise of his coming, not preventing it as Saul did Samuels with a foolish Sacrifice, only as himself confesses, lest the people should forsake him, 1 Sam. xiii. 11. and as is usual now, not to stay the coming of the *Spirit of Truth*, but to set up one of their own, no matter of what, to keep the people from scattering and forsaking them, any spirit, so it can keep them to them. They were to wait for the Promise of the Father, Acts i. 4. which was the Spirit of Truth. They did, and had it. Do we so, and so we shall too. Our case still is the same with theirs. They could not bear all truths together, no more can we. They stood in need of daily teaching, we do more. They wanted a guide, we cannot go without him. Truth is still as necessary to be known as then it was. To this purpose was the Holy Spirit promised, to this purpose sent, to this purpose serv'd, and serve he does still, the necessity being the same, like to be the same for ever; only fit we our selves to receive him when he comes; and howbeit things look strangely, and this promise seems almost impossible now, the Spirit of Truth will come, and *when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide them*, &c.

The words are Christs Promise of sending the Holy Spirit, now the fifth time repeated, to raise up the spirits of the drooping Disciples, now ready to faint and die away, upon the discourse of their Lords departure. He was now shortly to bid adieu to the world and them; yet so much he lov'd them, that he would not leave them comfortless, though himself, who was their only joy and comfort, was to go away, yet he would not leave them without another Comforter. Though he that was the way, must ascend, yet a guide should presently descend to guide

guide them after him; though he who was the Truth must back to Heaven, yet the Spirit of Truth should forthwith come down to guide them into all truth to bring them thither. So that here, even without a guide you may easily find two Considerables.

1. The *Advent*, or coming of the Holy Spirit, *when He the Spirit of Truth is come.*
2. The *Intent* or purpose of it, the end and benefit of his Advent or coming. He *will guide you into all Truth*; that's the business.

In the First we shall consider,

1. His title, *He the Spirit of Truth.*
2. His motion, *Is Come.*
3. His time, *when*, indefinite it is here, but a due time it has, and we will strive to learn when it is.
4. His manner of coming, (1.) Invisibly as a Spirit; (2.) Effectually as a Spirit of Truth; (3.) Gently and (4.) Softly: both implied in the word or term of *Coming*. (5.) Suddenly too sometimes, *when* he is come; as if so suddenly, that we should not feel or know it till he is.

In the Second, the Intent or Benefit of his coming we shall observe,

- (1.) The benefit, What it is; To *lead*. (2.) Whether? *into truth*. Into Truth, (3.) How far? *Into all Truth*. Yea, but (4.) to Whom all these? to *you*, even to lead *you*; *You and you*, and *you*, all of us, in our way, in our order, one after another: Yea, but lastly, *lead us*, and into *truth*, and into *all truth*; but How? *is* *is*, says the Text, shew and make and draw us out a way, and conduct and move, and actuate us in it.

When have thus considered them single and apart, we will joyn them again together and so leave them. Tell you how the leading is always proportionate to his coming, as he comes, so he leads, If he comes miraculously and extraordinarily, so he leads; if invisibly and ordinarily, so he leads; as much as he comes into us, so much he leads us; as is his coming, so is his leading and no other, the one answerable to the other,

And lastly, all this we shall make good from Christs promise here, (1.) That *his* Promise we have for it, who will not, cannot fail us, (2.) Promise upon promise, (3.) a promise with a *non obstante*, with a *Howbeit*; that howbeit, all else should fail, this should not; howbeit to the world this Spirit may prove something else then a Guide, a Reprover or a Judge, yet to us he shall be a guide into the way of truth. This will be the sum, these the heads of my Discourse, which that I may happily pursue; *Come thou O Spirit of Truth, and guide my thoughts and words this day, that I may teach thy ways unto the people, and declare thy Truth.*

We are to begin with the *Spirits Advent*, or his Coming; for come to us he must before he guide us; and that his entertainment may be according, enquire we; first, Who it is? His Titles here will best inform you; *He, the Spirit of, &c.*

1. *He*, What's *He*? *He*, is a relative, relates to an Antecedent, refers to some person mentioned before. Who's that? (1.) the *Comforter*, ver. 7. Who's *He*? the *Comforter*, (2.) which is the *Holy Ghost*, Chap. xiv. 26. (3.) One that the *world cannot receive*, ver. 17. of the same Chapter, so great that the world, as wide as it is, cannot contain him; so good; that the world, which (as *St. John* speaks) lies in wickedness, cannot receive

receive him ; (4.) a Comforter that shall *abide for ever*, ver. 16. an eternal Comforter , (5.) whom I will send unto you *from my Father*, Chap. xv. 26. a *heavenly* Comforter ; which *proceedeth from the Father*, the same verse, a Comforter who is the very *Spirit of God*, or *God the Spirit* proceeding. This is *He* we speak of, this is *He* that is said here to come, that is said still to come.

2. Well may the *Evangelist* stand and stop at his *ἐκείνῳ* here, stand and take breath here at this *He* ; as if he knew not how to go further, how to call him, how to express him : *He*, the Comforter ; he, that abides for ever ; he, whom the world cannot receive ; he, the Holy Ghost ; he that proceeds from the Father and the Son, all this he had said already, and more he thought he could not say, and therefore now here makes a halt, as I may say, *He* and no more, to give us time to consider of the greatness of the person that is to come, and to prepare for his coming.

Yet to confirm all that before he has said of him, as he began the promise of him, *Chap. xiv. ver. 16, 17.* under the name of the Spirit of Truth, so he concludes it with the same Title, that we might know, all that he has said is truth, all that Christ has promised of him is no more than truth ; for he is the Spirit of Truth : *The Spirit of Truth.*

1. To make good and true all that Christ had promised, the very *seal* and signature of our *Redemption*, *Ephes. iv. 30.* to seal the conveyance of our Inheritance to us, *Ephes. i. 14.* to make that good, to *bear witness with our spirit that we are the Children of God*, *Rom. viii. 16.* to make all good to us both in Heaven and in Earth.

2. He is the Spirit of Truth, because the Spirit of God and Christ. God is Truth, and Christ is the Truth, *St. John xiv. 16.* and the Spirit of God he is, *1 Cor. ii. 11.* and the Spirit of Christ he is, *Phil. i. 19.* so to be sure, the Spirit of Truth, if of God and Christ.

3. The Spirit of Truth is the Spirit of Prophecy, *Rev. xix. 10.* those holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, *2 Pet. i. 21. who spake by the Prophets*, says the *Nicene Creed*, and Prophets they are not, but liars, who speak not the truth, nor is it Prophecy, if it be not truth.

4. The Spirit of Truth, for that as he inspires grace, so he doth truth too, all supernatural truths to be sure : For truths there are many, and spirits there are many, but no truth but from him, nor no Spirit of Truth but he himself ; He is the Fountain of Truth, as in him and from him it is we live and breath ; He breaths into us this breath of life, the spirit of life from this Spirit ; so from this Spirit of Truth all the truth that at any time breaths from us, even natural truths and the truths of reason ; but that's not it. Inspired truths, spiritual truths, they, are the proper effects of this Spirit : Other truths may be from him, nay, are originally all from him, as all good from God that eternal source of goodness ; but they may sometimes arise and breath from our own spirits within, or be put into us by other spirits, by the ministry of Angels from without, but inspired truths from this Spirit alone.

Angels indeed are sometimes the *messengers* of it, but never called the *spirits* of it ; they bring it, they do not breath it : When they have brought it and done their message, be it never so true, never so comfortable, it will not comfort, but amaze us ; it will not sink into us, but ly only at our doors till this Spirit breath and work it in. He alone *Spiritus Veritatis*, the Inspirer of truth.

Hence

Hence it is that this Spirit of all Spirits is only call'd the *Comforter*, for that he only lets in the comfort to the heart whatever Spirit is the Messenger. Be it the Angels, those Spirits and Messengers of heaven, or be it the Ministers, those Messengers upon earth, with all the life and spirit they can give their words, no comfort from either, unless this Spirit of truth blow open the doors, inspire and breath in with them. Truth it self cannot work upon our spirits but by the spiration of this Spirit of truth. 'Tis but a dead Letter, a vanishing voice, a meer piece of articulate air, the best, the greatest, the soundest truth no other, it has no spirit, it has no life, but from this Spirit of truth.

To conclude this Point. It is not, when the *Spirit of truth is come*, or when *He*, that is, the *Comforter* is come, though both be but one, he shall guide you, neither title single, but *He*, the *Spirit of truth*, both together; to teach us first, That the truth which this Spirit brings is full of comfort, always comfortable. Startle us it may a little at the first, but then presently, Fear not, comes presently to comfort us; trouble us it may a little at the first, nay, and bring some tribulation with it, as times may be; but ere the verse be out, ere the words be out almost, *Be of good cheer*, says Christ, 'tis but in the world, and *I have overcome* the world, and in me *ye shall have peace*, St. *John* xvi. 33. that came before; so that tribulation is encompassed with comfort. *Ye shall be sorrowful* indeed, but your *sorrow shall be turned into joy*, ver. 20. the first is no sooner mentioned, but the other follows as fast as the *Comma* will let it. Christs truth, and this Spirits truth is the Comforters truth as well as the Spirits, and have not only spirit to act and do, but comfort also in the doing, and after it to be sure. Nay,

Joyn'd so (2.) *He*, the *Spirit of truth*, to teach us again, that nothing can comfort us but the truth, no Spirit hold up our Spirits but the Spirit of truth. Lies and falshoods may uphold us for a time, and keep up our Spirits, but long they will not hold; a few days will discover them, and then we are sadder than at first. To be deluded adds shame to our grief; 'tis this Spirit only that is the Spirit of our life, that keeps us breathing and alive; tis only truth that truly comforts us; which even then when it appears most troublesome, and at the worst, has this comfort with it; that we see it, that we see the worst, need fear no more, whilst the joys that rise from false apprehensions, or lying vanities, indeed from any thing below this Spirit of truth and heaven, bring so much fear of a change, or close, or too sudden an end, that I may well say they have no comfort with them. They flow not from this Comforter, they come not from this Spirit, that's the reason they have no Comfort, no Spirit in them. It may well occasion us as soon as we can to look after this *He*, the *Spirit of truth*, and for our own sakes enquire *where he is*, watch his motion, what, and whence, and whither it is.

2. To understand the motion and coming of the Spirit, what it means, we can take no better way than to peruse the Phrases of the holy Book, under what terms it elsewhere does deliver it. The first time we hear of it we read it moving, *Gen.* i. 3. The next time striving with man, *Gen.* vi. 3. Then filling him, *Exod.* xxxi. 3. Then resting upon him, *Num.* xi. 25. Sometimes he is said to come, *Judg.* iii. 10. Sometimes to enter into us, *Ezek.* ii. 2. Sometimes to fall upon us, *Ezek.* xi. 5. Sometimes to be put upon us, *Num.* xi. 29. Sometimes to be put into us, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 27. Sometimes to breath, sometimes to blow upon us, *Isa.* xl. 7. All these ways is he said to come; whether he move us to good, or strive with us against evil;

evil, or fill us with sundry gifts and graces, or rest upon us in their continuance; whether he comes upon us in the power of his Administrations; or whether he enter as it were and possess us wholly as his own; whether he appear in us, or without us; whether he come upon us so suddenly, and unusually, that he seems even to fall upon us, or be put upon us by ordinary ways and means; whether by imposition on, or breathing in; whether by a softer breath, or a stronger blast; whether he come in the feathers of a Dove, or on the wings of the wind; whether in Fire, or in Tongues; whether in a visible shape, or in an invisible power and grace; they are his comings all, sometimes one way, sometimes another, his comings they are all: Yet but some, not all of his comings, for all his ways are past finding out, and teach us a Lesson against curiosity in searching his out-goings.

And yet, this word *Come* sounds somewhat hard for all this still: Did we not say he was God? And can God be said to come any whither, who is every where? Nay, of this very Spirit expressly says the *Psalmist*, *Psal. cxxxix. 7. Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit?* And if I cannot go from him, what needs his coming? *Coming*, here, is a word of grace and favour; and certainly, be we never so much under his eye, we need that, need his grace, need his favour: Nay, so much the more because he is so near us, that so we may do nothing unworthy of his presence. But He speaks to us after the manner of men, who if they be persons of quality, and come to visit us, we count it both a favour and honour: So by inversion when God bestows either favours or honours on us, when this holy Spirit bestows a grace, or a gift, or a truth upon us that we had not before, then is he said to *Come* to us.

I need not now trouble my self much to find out *whence* he comes. *Every good and perfect gift comes from above*, says *St. James*, *Jam. i. 17*. From heaven it is he comes, from the Father, *he sends him*, *St. John xiv. 26*. From the Son, *he sends him too* in this very *Chapter*, *ver. 7*. And this is not only the place whence he comes, but here are the persons too whence he proceeds. So that now we have gain'd the knowledge, not only of his temporal, but his eternal coming to; his eternal Procession, which though it be not the coming promised or intended here; yet, *coming*, here upon the Context and Coherence, relating so evidently to sending, gives us but a just occasion both to remember to whom we owe this benefit, the Father and the Son, the greatness of it, in that it is no less than infinite, the Spirit of God, God himself.

And 'tis but fit here and every where to take notice of it, that as the whence is above, so the whither is beneath, very much beneath him. But we reserve that to a fitter place, when we come to the persons that are guided by him. 'Tis best now to suspend a while the search of the nature to enquire into the time and manner of his coming. But the time is next. *when* he is come.

3. Yea, but when is that? *Sane novum supervenisse spiritum nova desideria demonstrant*, says *St. Bernard*; you may know he is come by the desires he works in you, when those begin to be spiritual, hearty, sincere, and true to God, then is the Spirit of truth come into you; if you begin to long, and breath, and gasp after heaven 'tis a sign some heavenly breath of the Spirit, at least, is slipt into you.

2. When this Spirit that pants and beats after God within, breaths out at the lips too ere it belong in prayers to God, and praises of him, in good communication; all bitterness, and malice, and evil speaking,
and

and vanity too being laid aside as becommeth Saints. This is a good sign too, a true sign too, if it be not meerly godly Phrases taken up to make a shew, or to deceive; if it proceed from the heart and inward Spirit.

3. But the surest sign of it is in the hand, in the works, if they be such as are the genuine fruits of the Spirit, *Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*, Gal.v.23. These are the Spirits perpetual attendants when he comes. Boast men may of the Spirit, but if they have no love, if they be not the Sons of peace, if patience and long-suffering be no vertue with them, if gentleness appear not in their carriage, if goodness and bounty to the poor abound not in them as well as faith, if they be not meek, and humble, and sober, and temperate, temperate in diet, in apparel, in language, in passion, and affections, and all things else, boast they while they will of the Spirit, and the Spirit of truth, that they have it, work and move by it, are guided by it, it will prove but the Spirit of error, or the Spirit of giddiness, or the Spirit of slumber, (they do but dream it) or but their own Spirit, at the best, for such a one we read of, and of Prophets that went according to it, *Ezek.xiii.3.* foolish Prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing; ignorant Prophets, who know nothing, yet pretend they know more than all the Learned, all the Fathers that are gone; crafty Foxes only they are, says the Prophet, *ver. 4.* cunning to spoil and ravine; that seduce the people, saying, peace, when there is no peace, *ver. 8.* they build and dawb with untempered mortar, *ver. 10.* build up *Babel* the house of confusion, and plaister up all the Scriptures Texts that are against them with incoherent Comments, wild distinctions and interpretations, that stick together like untempered mortar; they make the righteous sad, and strengthen the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life, *ver. 22.* and yet they there pretended the Spirit; that he was come to them, and God had sent them, when indeed it was no other Spirit from the Lord than such a one as came from him upon *Saul* when the good Spirit was departed from him. The Spirit of truth wants no such covering, no such mortar, makes not the righteous sad, makes no body sad by any oppression, joy is the fruit of it; strengthens not the wicked in his wickedness, it is all for justice and righteous dealing. And where it comes upon any, it as *Samuel* foretold it, *1 Sam. x. 6.* and *Saul* found it, *1 Sam. x. 9.* gives him another heart, turns him into another man. The new man *St. Paul* calls it, created in righteousness and true holiness, *Eph. iv. 2.*

Indeed, there was another kind of coming of his this *Day*. He came to day not only into the hearts, but upon the heads of the Apostles; sate there, and thence disperst his heavenly light into rays and flames; came down in wind, and fire, and tongues; in wind, to shew that it was the Holy Spirit, the very breath of heaven; that came in fire, to signifie the light of truth it brought; and in tongues, to express it to the world. But it was his Inauguration day, the first solemnity of his appearance, that so both the Disciples and the World might know that come he was whom Christ had promised, and be convinced by a visible apparition, who else would not have been convicted by any inward evidence which had been without it.

✕ But thus he appeared but only once. In the effect of Tongues indeed, but not in the appearance of them, he twice afterwards fell upon some Disciples, upon the *Centurion* and his Company the first fruits of

the *Gentiles*, *Acts* x. 46. and upon those Disciples at *Ephesus*, who knew nothing but *John's* Baptism, that so they might sensibly find the difference of *John's* Baptism and *Christ's*, *Acts* xix. 6. They both, as soon as they were baptized, spake with tongues, says the *Text*; the one so honour'd, to teach this truth, that in all Nations, whoever doth righteousness shall be accepted, the *Gentiles* now in *Christ* as well accepted as the *Jews*; the other so highly favoured, that imperfect Christians might be encouraged to go on, and not be dismayed to see so many glorious *Professors* so exceedingly transcend them.

These comings were miraculous; only to found Christianity, and settle an Article of Faith, the Article of the Holy Ghost, never distinctly known to the world till Christianity arose. *Christ* himself was fain to confirm his Divinity by signs and miracles; and the God-head of the Holy Ghost can be persuaded by no less. But this once done, he was to lead us by an ordinary tract, no longer now by sight, but faith, that *salvation might be through faith*, 1 Pet. i. 5. and the blessing upon them who have not seen, and yet have believed, *St. John* xx. 29. λ

This I must needs say seems the prime and proxime meaning of the words, but not the full. *when he is come*, points chiefly and nearest at this his first and nearest coming, but not only at it. Else are we in an ill case now, if no spirit to come to us, no guide to lead us, no truth to settle us. It must extend beyond that his visible coming, to the ways of his coming unto us still, unseen and unheard; or *however expedit vobis*, it was expedient for them that *Christ* should go away, that the Comforter might come, for us it is not I am sure, if we have none to come. Settle we therefore this for an Article of our faith, that he comes still. I told you before how you should know it by his breathings inwardly in you good thoughts and desires, his breathings outwardly good words and expressions, by his workings with you, good life and actions, in a word, by his gifts and graces.

But if this be all, why is it now said, *when he is come*? Came he not thus before to the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*? were not they partakers of his gifts, mov'd and stirr'd and actuated by him? why then so much ado about *Christ's* sending him now, and of his coming now, as if he was never sent, never came before?

We read indeed in the *Old Testament* often of his coming, never of his sending but by way of promise, that God would send, or of prophesie, that he should be sent, and that but once neither expressly, *Psal.* civ. 30. *Emitte spiritum & creabuntur*. So, though come he did, in those days of old, yet voluntarily, meerly we might conceive never sent, never so distinct a notion of his person then; then only as the Spirit of God, now as the Spirit of the Father and the Son; then only as the Power of God, now as a Person in the God-head. This the *first* difference between his coming then and now.

2. Then he came as the Spirit of Prophecie, now as the Spirit of Truth, that is, as the very truth and fulfilling of it, of all the former Prophecies.

3. Then upon *Judea*, and few else besides, it may be *Job* in the land of *Uz*, and *Rahab* in *Jericho*, and *Ruth* in *Moab*, here and there, now and then one; now upon *all flesh*; upon *Jew* and *Gentile* both alike, the partition-wall like the walls of *Jericho*, blown down by the breath of this Spirit, by the blast of this *horn* of the most High.

4. Then most in types and shadows, now clearly and in truth.

5. Then

5. Then sparingly, they only sprinkled with it; now poured out, *Joel's Effundam* fulfilled, *Acts* ii. 1. a common phrase become now; full of the Holy Ghost, *Acts* vii. 55. and filled with the Spirit, *Ephes.* v. 18.

6. Then he came and went, lighted a little, but staid not, *motabat*, or *volitabat*, flew or fluttered about, mov'd and stirr'd them at times, as it did *Sampson*, *Judg.* xiii. 25. coming and going; now 'tis he is come. He fate him down upon the *Apostles*, *Acts* ii. 3. fate him down in the Chair at their *Synod*, *Acts* xv. 28. *Visum est Spiritui Sancto & nobis*; calls us his *Temples* now, not his *Tabernacles*, places of a during Habitation, and is to abide with us for ever.

Lastly, Then he came to help them in the observance of the Jewish and Moral Law, now to plant and settle an obedience to the Christian Faith. For Christ being to introduce a more perfect and explicate faith in the blessed Trinity, and a Redeemer, to wean men from the first elements and beggarly rudiments, as the *Apostle* calls them, to raise them from earthly to heavenly promises, to elevate them to higher degrees of love and hope, and charity, and vertue and knowledge, and being besides to arm them against those contradictions and oppositions that would be made against them by the world, those persecutions and horrid ways of martyrdom they were to encounter with in the propagation of the Christian Faith; for these ends it was necessary that the Spirit of Truth should come anew, and come with power, as it did at first with wonder, that by its work and power those great and glorious truths might be readily received and embraced. For this seems the very end of his coming, to convince the world, ver. viii. of this Chapter, and to testify of him; Chap. xv. 26. and to glorify him, in the very next verse to the text, ver. 14. to evince this new revealed truth to the souls and consciences of men, that *Messiah* was come, that Jesus was the Christ, that the Jewish Sacrifices were now to have an end, that the Prophecies were all fulfilled in him, that his Law was now to succeed in the place of *Moses's*, that he justified where the Law could not; that through him now, in his Name, and in none other Salvation henceforth was to be preached to Jew and Gentile, and God had open'd now that door of hope to all the world. To bear witness to this, and perswade this truth, so opposite to Natural and Jewish reason, or so much above the ordinary reach of the one, and the received customs of the other; thus to enhance Piety and Perfection, thus to set up Christ above the Natural and Mosaic Law; thus now to glorify God in Christ, and Christ as Christ; need there was, great need that the Spirit of Truth himself should come himself, after a new fashion, in a greater manifestation of his power than in former times, bring greater grace because he required of us a greater work.

All this while we have given you but general notions of his coming, either when he first came in his fulness, on the Apostles and first Disciples; or when, secondly, he comes on any, as the Holy Spirit, in good motions and affections: We are yet to see when he comes as the Spirit of Truth: to descend now, thirdly, to a distinct and particular enquiry, When the Spirit of Truth is in us, or come to us; when we have him in us?

Nor is this way of consideration less necessary than the other; though (it may be) harder far, forsomuch as we daily see many a pious Christian Soul seduced into Error, in whom yet we cannot doubt but the Holy Spirit has a dwelling: many a good man also err in many opinions; of whose portion of the good Spirit we make no question:

whilst some, many, others of less Piety, it may be none, more fully know the truth than either of the other.

Understand therefore there is a double way of knowing even divine truth, (1.) the one by the way of natural reason, by principles and conclusions rationally and logically deduced out of the evidences of Scripture: (2.) the other by particular assents and dissents of the Understanding and Will purified and sanctified to all ready obedience to Christ.

By the first, it comes that the greatest *scholars*, the most learned and rational men know always the most truths both speculative and practical both in their Principles and Inferences, and are therefore always fittest to determine doubts, and give counsel and direction both what to believe and what to do, in all particular controversies and debates which concern either Truth or Error, or Justice and Injustice, Right or Wrong; the practices and customs of former times and Churches, or their contraries and disuses; and this may be done without the Spirit of Sanctification, or the holy sanctifying Spirit, under that title at least, though indeed under another title it comes from him; as the gift of Tongues, or Interpretation, or Prophecy, or the Word of Wisdom, or the Word of Knowledge, are reckoned by the *Apostle* to come from the same Spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 8. it may be, most properly from him as he is the Spirit of Truth.

By the second way of knowledge it comes to pass, that men of less capacities; and lower understandings, applying their affections as well as understandings to embrace the Truth, do know and understand it more effectually, are more resolute in the defence of it, express it better in their lives, and know more sometimes of the particular ways of God in his particular Providence and Direction of the affairs of his Saints, (for of this kind of wisdom the *fear of the Lord always is the beginning*) and it often happens of the passages of the World too, as they relate to Gods disposing order. Yet by reason of the inabilities of understanding, or want of the course or means of knowledge, it falls out that they oftener err in the conceits and apprehensions of things than the other. And more than so, it as often comes to pass, whether to humble them when they begin to be proud of their holiness and piety, and think themselves so much above other men, wiser, better, more holy, more righteous than they; or to punish them for some particular sin, as disobedience, curiosity of enquiring into depths above them, singularity, discontentedness, self-seeking, or the like; or to stir up their endeavours now beginning to languish; or to make them yet more circumspect and wary in their ways; for these or some such causes, I say, it comes to pass that God suffers them to run into grand and enormous errors, foul and foolish extravagancies of opinion, which if once they trench on practice, and are deliberate in, or might with ease industry have been avoided, even grieve and quench that Holy Spirit that was in them, and expel him too; but if their errors be involuntary, not easy for them at that time to be avoided, or of lesser moment, stand they may with the Spirit of Grace, and they good men still.

How therefore now shall we know what is from the Spirit of Truth, when he comes so to us, is but a necessary enquiry; yet the resolution is hard and difficult: I know no better way to resolve you than by searching the nature of this Spirit of Truth, as Christ has pleased to express him in his last most holy and comfortable Discourse, of which the Text is
but

but a part, the several expressions of whose nature and office set together, will I am confident assure us of a way to discern the Spirit of truth, when it is that *He* speaketh in us. You may turn your leaves and go along with me.

Chap. xiv. 17. The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive; so then (1.) if the Article or Opinion which we receive be such an one as the world cannot, if it be contrary to worldly interests, carnal respects, sensual pleasures, 'tis a good sign at first. If it cannot enter into a carnal or natural mans heart, if mans wisdom teach it not, as the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor. ii. 13.* if it grow not in the garden of nature, that's a good sign 'tis the Spirit of truth is come that thus enables us to receive a Doctrine so disadvantageous and displeasing.

Look into the next verse, *ver. 18.* *I will not leave you comfortless;* If then (2.) it be such an assertion that has good ground in it to rest upon, that will not fail us in distress, that will stick by us in our deepest agonies, comfort us in our greatest discomforts, not leave us when all earthly comforts do, then 'tis from above, then 'tis a true comfort, a truth from this *He*, this Spirit of truth that is the Comforter too.

See next *v. 26.* *He shall teach you all things, bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.* If then (3.) it be an assertion that carries the analogy of faith along with it, that agrees with all the other principles of Christian faith, that is, according to the rule of Christs holy word, that soberly and truly brings to our remembrance what he has said at any time, or done for us, that remembers both the words that he spake, and the deeds that he has done; his actions and example, if it be according to his example of humility, obedience, patience, and love, if it bring us heartily to remember this Christs pattern in our lives and opinions too, then it comes from him that should come, and is worth your receiving and remembering it.

In the same verse again, in the words just before, he is called the *Comforter* and *Holy Ghost*, who is also there promised to teach us too. And if the Doctrine be such, that not only comforts us in the receiving and remembrance, but such also as becomes Comforters too, that teaches us to comfort others, the poor and needy, the afflicted and distressed, and to do it holily too as by the Holy Ghost, that is with good and pure intentions, and do it even to their Ghosts and Spirits as well as to their bodies if it teach true holy Ghostly spiritual counsel, and all other convenient comfort to them our Christian brethren: Then 'tis (4.) a doctrine from this Spirit of truth, he comes in it.

Turn ye now to *Chap. xv. 23.* *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, &c.* When the Doctrine (5.) is no other than what either establishes the Doctrine of the holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; or contradicts it not, and in all benefits received refers thanks and acknowledgment to the one as well as the other; as from the one, through the other, by a third. In this particular it is no other than the Spirit of truth, for no other Spirit can reveal it.

Go on now through the verse. *He shall testify of me.* The Doctrine (6.) that bears witness of Christ, that he is God, that he is Man, that he is Christ the Saviour of the World, that he came to save sinners, all whosoever would come to him, not a few particular ones only; that he is a complete and Universal Saviour, such as he profest himself by entertaining all comers, sending his Spirit and Apostles into all Nations, commanding
them

them to preach to every creature, which are no other than his own words, this is also from the Spirit of truth; a Doctrine worthy Him that is the Comforter, that brings so general a comfort with it.

Step now into the next Chapter, *chap. xvi.* to which we owe the Text. *when he is come he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, ver. 8.* When the Doctrine is (7.) such as it reproves the world of sin; that it can do no good of it self; that it is full of evil and corruption; convinces it, and finds fault with it for infidelity and unbelief; sets up Christs righteousness, and blames the world for neglecting it, and following its own vanity, interests, and humours; professes the Prince of the world cast out by Christ, the devil overcome and brought to judgment by him, our sins forgiven, we acquitted, and the World condemned; this cannot be from the Spirit of the World, nor from the Spirit of the Flesh, nor from the Spirit of darkness and error, (for this were to bear witness against themselves) but from the Spirit of light and truth.

Read the Text now over again, *when he, &c. he shall guide you into all truth.* If it be the Spirit of truth that informs you, it will (8.) dispose you equally to all truth, not to this only, or to that, which most agrees with your education, humour, temper, or disposition, condition, custom, interest; or estate, but universally to all, to any though never so hard or opposite to them, so they be truths. He that is thus affected towards truth, is not only probable to be directed into truth, in all his Doctrines and Assertions, but may most properly be said to have the Spirit of truth already come, speaking and residing in him.

Yet go a little further to the next words. *He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear;* that Spirit (9.) that does not seek it self, that opinion which renounces the glory of a Leader, the ambition of a Faction, the affectation of Singularity, the honour of himself, that speaks not of its own head, but what he has heard with his ears and his Fathers have declared as done in the time of old; that makes not new opinions, but takes up the old, such as Christ delivered to the Apostles, they also to the Fathers, they downward to their successors, this is most probably, if not most certainly the Spirit of truth. The Spirit sure of humility it is, that trusts not, relies not on its self or its own judgment, and the Spirit of humility is the Spirit of truth; for them that be meek and humble, them shall he guide in judgment, and such as be gentle, them does he learn his way, *Psal. xxv. 8.*

Yet on a little: And *he will shew you things to come.* Those Doctrines (10.) that refer all to the world to come, which mind nothing seriously but things above, and things to come, which ever and only teach us to fix there, they are surely from the Spirit of truth, because no truth like that which is to fulfil all promises, and that to be sure is yet to come.

One more glance and I have done with this; and 'tis but a glance to the very next words: *He shall glorifie me.* Those Doctrines which give God all the glory, which return the glory of all to Christ, which so exalt man only as the better thereby to glorifie God; so set up Christ, as that they make him both the healer of our nature, and the preserver of it, the remitter of our sins, and the conferrer of Grace; the first mover of us to good, the assister of us in it, the sanctifier of us with it, the justifier of us thorow it, the rewarder of us for it, and yet all this while the acceptor of us when we have done the best; which accuses not Christ
of

of false judgment in justifying the sinner whilst he is no better, and pronouncing him just when he is no other than wicked and unjust, nor denies the efficacy of his grace to make us clean, to have a true cleansing, purifying, sanctifying power, as well as that which they call the justifying: these Doctrines which take not this glory away from Christ, but give the power as well of making as pronouncing righteous to his grace, that thus magnifie and glorifie his Justification and Redemption, they certainly glorifie Christ, are the only Doctrines that glorifie Christ truly, and according to the Spirit of truth.

So now let's sum up the matter. Those Doctrines which are contrary to worldly, carnal, sensual respects, not conceivable by the natural or carnal man; That (2.) stick by us when worldly comforts leave us; That (3.) are according to Christs Word and his Example, accompanied with Meekness and Obedience; Which (4.) teach us charity and love to one another; Which (5.) inform us rightly in the prime Articles of the Faith; Which (6.) witness nothing more than Christ an universal Saviour, as *Adam* the universal sinner; Which (7.) reprove the sins and infidelities of the World, and shew us the way to be acquitted from them; Which (8.) have a kind of conduct and sincere affection with them to all truths whatsoever, under whatever term or name, though never so odious, so contrary to interest or honour; Which (9.) seek not their own name, to get a name, or set up a Faction, but are consonant to the ancient Fathers and Primitive Antiquity, with humble submission to it; Which (10.) lift up all our thoughts to heaven; and (11.) by all means possible can give God, and Christ, and the holy Spirit the glory, deny nothing to them that is theirs, under a foolish pretence only to abate and vilifie man beyond the truth; these Doctrines are truth, so much of them, at least, as agree with these Rules, are from the Spirit of truth, and are manifestations, that the Spirit of truth is come to that soul that embraces them: If all these together, then the Spirit altogether; if but some of these, but some; so much of that neither. All Doctrines and Opinions (1.) that favour of worldly or carnal interests; that (2.) change and wheel about according to the times, and will not hold out to the last; which (3.) are not regulated by the Word of God, or are any way contrary to Christs Example of Patience and Obedience; Which (4.) are not for peace and charity; Which (5.) deny any Article of the three Creeds we acknowledge; Which (6.) confine the mercies of our Saviour, and bear false witness of him; Which (7.) advance any sin, or suffer men to live in it; Which (8.) love not truth because it is truth, but for other ends; Which (9.) seek any other title to be distinguished by than that of Christian, or glories in it, which disagree from the stream and current of Antiquity; Which (10.) fixes our thoughts too much below; Or (11.) rob God, or Christ, or the holy Spirit of the glory of any good, or the perfection of their work; be they cried up never so high for truth, and Spirit, the new discovery of Christ, and new light of truth, and the very dictate of the Spirit, they are not so; it is not *when*, nor *then* that the Spirit of truth is come; there is not that in them by which Christ has described the Spirit of truth.

One thing there is behind, when all these requisites before are found in any Doctrine or Opinion; this Doctrine indeed may be such as comes from the Spirit of truth, yet accepted and entertained it may be through some other Spirit, upon some sinister end or ground; that therefore it
may

may not only be the truth of the Spirit, but have the very Spirit of truth with it, that it may be evident it not only comes from him, but that he also is come with it, it must be sincerely and intimately embraced with our very hearts and spirits out of love to truth, not any interest or by-respect, and well habituated and actuated in us, before we can say directly that the Spirit of truth is come. Some truth or other may be come, some ray and beam of his light be sent before him, but himself not yet fully come; for all truth comes along with him, though not actually altogether, yet a hearty resolute affection to all of it, all truth altogether, as God shall let it come.

I have been somewhat long in this particular, about the Spirits coming, because I see the World so much mistaken in it, so often crying, Lo! here he is, lo! there he is, lo! here he comes, lo! there he comes, when indeed he is nor here, nor there, with neither of them, nor coming to them. A word now of the manner of his coming.

4. And that is (1.) Invisibly, for so comes a Spirit. This is the coming we hold by, and had he not come, when he came, as well invisibly into the hearts as visibly upon the heads of the Disciples, their Tongues, though all the tongues of men and Angels would have profited them nothing; the fire then, had it not enflamed their hearts and affections with a holy flame, as well as encompassed their heads, would have only lighted them with more glory into eternal fires. Had not this wind blown as well within as that did without them, it would have blow'd them little good. Tongues, and Prophecie, Interpretations, Miracles, and the rest, are but *donæ gratis data*, gifts more for others good than for our own; they do not make us better in his sight, 'tis the invisible grace that makes us accepted. Nay, yet those very gifts and administrations, however the appearance was without, were wrought within by his invisible operation. So that to the Apostles as much as to our selves, his invisible coming is the only, truly, comfortable coming.

That (2.) is Effectual too. To come truly is to come effectually; and in that he is called the Spirit of truth, 'tis plain he must effect what it is he comes for, or 'tis not true and real. It was a mighty rushing wind, he this day came in; so mighty, so effectual, that it at once converted three thousand souls; the Spirit of power is one of his names, and the pulling down of strong holds, casting down every thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ is one of his works, 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

3. He comes gently, (that's the common pace of one that is only said to come.) Gently, step by step, grace after grace, gift after gift, truth after truth, leads by steps, comes by degrees; not all grace at a clap, all gifts in a trice. Nay, as hastily as it seem'd to come this day, St. Peter, the chief of them, was a while after at a loss for a truth, had not, it seems, all truths together: *Of a truth now I perceive that God is no respecter of persons*, Acts x. 34. before it seems he perceived it not; no more did the other Apostles neither, who were all in the same error, and converted him about this new truth, and contended with him about it. Acts xi. 2.

4. Nay, softly too; as dew into a fleece of Wooll, without noise, without clamour, no way like the Spirits now adays; *I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets*, Isa. xlii. 1, 2. He is the Spirit of meekness who is the Spirit of truth, and truth is never taught so soon, so effectually as by softness

softness and meekness; the meek the best to teach, the best to be taught.

5. Yet as gently and softly as he comes, he is often upon us on a sudden, ere we are aware. God uses to prevent us with the blessings of goodness, as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal. xxi. 3.* He is come, sometimes, before we think of it. Our hearts are in his hand, and he suddenly turns them whither he will. *Saul* does but turn him about from *Samuel* and God gives him presently another heart, *1 Sam. x. 9.* *Samuel* no sooner anoints *David*, but from thence-forward the Spirit came upon him, *1 Sam. xvi. 13.* And this note is made, not that you should always look for miraculous changes, and expect the Spirit, without so much as setting your selves to seek him, but to make you watch continually, and wait for him, that though he come suddenly, he may not find you unprepared, the doors shut upon him, that he may not go as he comes for want of entertainment.

Yet the Phrase will bear another expression of the manner of his coming. *when he is come*, that is, when he is grounded and well settled in us, the Tense is the Aorist, a Preterperfect signification; signifies not coming, but perfectly come. This is not actually always to every one he comes to, yet his intent it is in all his coming, to stay and abide with us, and so he does till we drive him thence. But if we do not, if we let him stay, and dwell, and remove him not, then will he guide us into all truth; that's the End and Intention of his coming the next Point. But I am beyond my intent and time already; I shall only sum up this last particular of the manner of his coming and let you go.

You will peradventure understand it best by considering how the Spirit mov'd in the Creation, the order the same in creating the new man in the soul that he there observed in creating of the World.

Now in the first Creation of the World,

He first moved upon the waters, then created light, and divided it from darkness; he next divides the Waters, and places a Firmament between them; then (3.) gathers the Waters together, and makes dry land appear, and bring forth grass, and herbs, and trees, bearing seed; then (4.) makes two glorious Lights to rule the day, and night, and times, and years; then (5.) creates fowl, and fish, and beasts; and lastly, makes man after his own Image.

Thus does he in this new Creation, or Regeneration. He first moves and stirs us up to good, then darts in some glimmerings of light to shew us our own darkness, sins, and wretchedness; Then next (2.) divides the passions and powers of the soul, and sets them their bounds, employs some in things above, whilst some other are left beneath; Then (3.) presently makes the dry and barren soul sprout out, bring herbs, and leaves, and seeds, into green flourishing desires, holy resolutions and endeavours which carry with them seed, much hope of encrease; (4.) To cherish these green and tender sprouts, to direct and rule these resolutions, desires, and endeavours, two Lights he makes, true rectified reason, and supernatural grace, to guide them what to do at all seasons, days, and years, and many little Stars, many glimmerings of truth begin then to discover themselves, which before did not. After all this (5.) the sensitive faculties in their course and order bring forth their living creature according to their kind, submit themselves to the command of the superiour reason; And then lastly, when the Spirit has thus totally renewed the face of the earth, of our mind and

affections is the new man created after the likeness and image of God in righteousness and true holiness. This the course, this the order of the Spirits coming, He comes moving upon the waters of repentance, and first enlightens the darkness of our souls, he orders all our faculties and powers, he makes us fruitful to good works, he daily encreases divine light and heat within us; he reforms our sense, subdues our passions, regulates our reason, sanctifies them all, comes in light, comes in grace, comes in truth, comes in strength, comes in power, that we might in his strength and power come one day all in glory.

And now, he that thus created the old World, and still creates the new, new create and make us new, and pray we all, with holy *David*, Psal.li.10. *Create, O Lord, in us new hearts, and renew right spirits within us.* Cast us not, O Lord, for ever, though we are now full of errors, from thy presence, and keep not thy holy Spirit from us, but let thy Spirit of truth come down and guide us out of our wandrings, give us the comfort of his help again, guide us again into the ways of truth, and stablish us there with thy free Spirit, and that for the merits and mercies of thine only Son, who here promised to send him, and this day accordingly sent him to guide us to himself, from grace to grace, from truth to truth, from truth below to true happiness above, Jesus Christ our Saviour. To whom, &c.

THE

THE THIRD SERMON UPON Whitsunday.

St. JOHN xvi 13.

Howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come] *He will guide you into all truth.*



AND He this day began to guide ; has continued guiding ever since , will go on guiding to the end, began it with the *Apostles*, continued it to the *Church*, and will continue it to it to the end of the World.

Indeed he that looks upon the face of the Christian Churches now , would be easily tempted to think, that either the time was not yet come, that it should be fulfilled, or that it had been long ago, and his *promise come utterly to an end for evermore*. For so far are we from a guide into all truth, that we have much ado to find a guide in truth , false guides and false spirits are so rife ; so far from being guided into all truth, that 'tis neerer truth to say into all error ; as if this guide had quite forsaken us, or this promise belong'd not at all to us. Yet for all that, to us it is.

For the truth is ; 'tis not this Guides , this Spirits fault, but ours, that this *all truth* is so nigh *none* at all. *He will guide still*, but *we will not be guided*. And into all truth too he will, but we will not ; we will have no more than will serve our turn, stand with our own humour, ease and interest ; that's the reason why he guides not now as in the days of the *Apostles*, the first times, the times of old. We will not let him ; we cannot bear it, as it is in the verse before ; or worse, we will not bear, we will not endure it, every one will be his own guide, go his own way, make what truth he pleases, or rather what him pleases the only truth, every one follow his own spirit, that's the reason why we have so little of the Spirit of Truth among us. There are so many private spirits that there is no room for this.

Yet if into all, or indeed any truth that's worth the name of saving, we would be guided ; to this One we must return, to *one* spirit, or to

no truth. There is but one Truth and one Spirit, all other are but fancies. He that breaks the unity of the Spirit, that sets up many spirits, sets up many guides, but never a true one; chance he may perhaps into a truth, but not be guided to it, and as little good come of it where the *analogie* of Scripture and Truth must needs be broken by so many differing and divided spirits. 'Tis time we think of holding to one Spirit, that we may all hold the same Truth, and in time be led into it all. The only question is, Whether we will be led or no? If we will not, the business is at an end. If we will, we must submit to this Spirit, and his guidance, his manner and way of guiding: By so doing we shall not fail in any necessary saving truth; *He will guide us into all truth.*

Which that he may, as I have heretofore out of the former words told you of his coming, so shall I now by his assistance out of these latter tell you of his guiding; for to that intent and purpose he came to day, and comes every day, came at first, and comes still; comes (1.) to guide, to guide (2.) into truth, (3.) into all truth, (4.) even you and all into it, yet (5.) to guide only, not to drive or force us; to guide after his own way and fashion, not our fancie; of which, lastly, we need not doubt or make a question, he *will* do it.

So that now the Parts of the Text will plainly rise into these Propositions:

1. That though Christ be gone, he has not left us without a guide, but has sent *Him* that shall guide us still.
2. That He that shall do it is *He*, that very *He*, that is, the *Spirit of Truth*, just before. No other can.
3. That guide therefore into truth, he will, no other will.
4. That he will guide not into this truth, or that truth only, but into *all*.
5. That he will guide even *us* too. You, and you, and you, us as well as those that were before us; all's but *You*.
6. That he will do it yet but after his own way and fashion, *id est*, after the way he comes; after as he comes, so will he guide, set us a way to find the truth, and guide us after *that way* and no other.
7. That for certain so it is. *He will*, *Howbeit* he will, though yet he has not, though yet we peradventure will not or cannot endure to be guided, yet when we will set our selves to it, He will guide us into *&c.* it shall be no fault or failure of his, for he for his part will, is always willing.

The sum of all is this, to assure us (1.) that notwithstanding all the errors and false spirits now abroad, there is a *Spirit of Truth* still ready and willing to guide us into all truth yet; and (2.) to shew us how he will do it, that we may learn how to be guided by him. This the sum. And the *Use* of all will be, that we submit our selves to him and to his guidance, to be taught and led and guided by him; to his guiding and to his truth, and to *all* of it, without exception. To guide and to be guided are relatives, infer one another. If we will have him guide us he will have us be guided by him, and give up our selves to his way of guiding. Oh that we would, that there were but a heart in us to do so! we should not then have so many spirits, but more truth, one Spirit would be all, and all truth would be one, this one single Spirit would be sufficient to guide us into all truth: He would guide us into all truth. But I must from my wishes to my words, where we see first we have a guide; that though Christ be ascended from us into Heaven, yet we are not without a guide upon the Earth.

I. *I will not leave you comfortless*, said he, when he was going hence, St. *John* xiv. 18. Had he left us without a guide he had so, comfortless indeed in a vast and howling wilderness, this earth is little else. But a *Comforter* he sends, ver. 7. such a one as shall *teach us all things*, St. *John* xiv. 26. that's a comfort indeed, none like it, to have one to guide us in a dangerous and uncertain way, to teach us that our ignorance requires, to do all the offices of a guide unto us, to teach us our way, to lead us, if need be, in it, to protect and defend us through it, to answer for us if we be questioned about it, and to cheer us up, encourage and sustain us all the way.

II. Such a guide as this, is (2.) this *He* we are next to speak of. *He*, the *Spirit of Truth*, so 'tis interpreted but immediately before. He shall teach you, teach you the way, reveal Christ to you, for unless he do you cannot know him, teach you how to pray, *Rom.* viii. 26. teach you what to say, how to answer, by the way, if you be called to question in it, St. *Luke* xii. give you a mouth and wisdom too, St. *Luke* xxi. 15. teach you not only to speak, but to speak to purpose. He (2.) shall lead you too, *deducet*, lead you on, be a prop and stay and help to you in your journey. He (3.) shall protect and defend you in it as a guide, free you from danger, set you at full liberty, *2 Cor.* iii. 17. be a cover to you by day, and a shelter to you in the night; the breath of the Holy Spirit, will both refresh us and blow away all our enemies like the dust. He (4) if we be charged with any thing will answer for us like a guide and governor. 'Tis not *you* says Christ, but the *Spirit* of your *Father*, that speaketh in you, St. *Matth.* x. 20. He, lastly, it is that quicken our spirit with his Spirit, that encourages and upholds us like a guide and leader, for without him our spirits are but soft air, and vanish at the least pressure. He guides our feet, and guides our heads, and guides our tongues, and guides our hands, and guides our hearts, and guides our spirits; we have neither spirit nor motion, nor action, nor life without him.

III. But here particularly he comes to guide us into the *Truth*. And God knows we need it; for surely *men of low degree are vanity*, says the *Psalmist*, and *men of high degree are a lie*, *Psal.* lxii. 9. not lyars only, but a very lye, as far from truth as a lie it self, things so distant from that conformity with God, which is truth (for truth is nothing else) that no lie is further off it. Nor soul, nor body, nor heart, nor mind, nor upper nor lower powers conformed to him, neither our understandings to his understanding, nor our wills to his will, nor any thing of us really to him, our actions and words and thoughts all lye to him, to his face; we think too low, we speak too mean, we deal too falsely with him, pretend all his, yet give most of it to our lusts and to our selves, and we are so used to it, we can do no other, we are all either verbal or real lies, need we had of one to guide us into the truth.

God is Truth, to guide us to him. Christ is the Truth, St. *John* xiv. 6. to guide us to him. His Word is Truth to guide us into that, into the true understanding and practise of it. His Promises are Truth, very *Tea* and *Amen*, to guide us to them, to rest and hold upon them. His way is the way of Truth, to guide us into that, into a Religion pure, holy and undefiled; that only is the true one. Into none of these can any guide but this guide here. He sheweth us of the Father, He reveals to us the Son, He interprets the Word and writes it in our hearts, He leads and upholds us by his Promises, seals them unto us, seals us again to the day of Redemption, the day of truth, the day when all things shall appear

appear truly as they are. He sets our Religion right, *he only* leads us into *that*. Man cannot, he can speak but to the ear, there his words dye and end. Angels cannot, they are but *ministring spirits* at the best to this Spirit. Nature cannot; these truths are all above it, are *supernatural*, and no other truth is worth the knowing. Nay, into any truth, this Spirit only can; we only flatter and keep ado about this truth and that truth, and the other, but *into* them we cannot get, make nothing of any truth without him; unless he sanctifie it, better else we had not known it: Knowledge puffeth up, all knowledge that comes not from this Spirit: so the *very* truth of any truth, that which truly confirms it to the divine will and understanding, that makes truth the same with goodness, is from this Spirit, from his guiding and directing, his breathing it, or breathing into it, or upon it.

IV. Thus we are faln upon the *fourth* particular, that he will guide us into *all* truth.

Gods mercies and Christs are ever perfect, and of the largest size, and the conducts of the Spirit are so too, into all goodness, *Gal. v. 9.* into all fulness, *Ephes. iii. 19.* into all truth here, into all things. That we are not full is from our selves; that we are not led into all truth, is for that all truth does not please us, and we are loth to believe it such if it make not for us: he for his part is as ready to guide us into *all* as into *one*.

For take we truth either for *speculative* or *practical*, either for the substance against types and shadows, or the discerning the substance through those shadows; or take we it in opposition to obscurity and doubting, understand we it for what is truly to be believ'd, or lov'd, or hop'd, or fear'd, or done, (as under these is contain'd all that is saving truth,) so they are all taught us by this Spirit. The signification of all old types and shadows, sacrifices and ceremonies, the things, which whilst Christ was with us we were not able to bear, *ver. 12.* the things, which when they were done we did not understand, all that we are to believe and do, what to hope, and what to fear, what to desire and what to love this Spirit teaches. And that first,

Not as other spirits teach, which teach by halves, so much only as may serve to nurse up their *faction* and their side, but nothing more, but *all*, *whatever is commanded*, keeps back nothing, as St. Paul professes for himself, *Acts xx. 20.* nothing that is profitable unto you, that is, nothing profitable to Salvation.

Not secondly, as other spirits, which teach impertinent or idle truths, or meer natural ones; indeed for such truths as have neither spiritual profit or command, he is neither bound nor binds himself; is neither sent nor comes to teach them; such truths as appertain not unto holiness, the Holy Spirit is not promised for. Yet all that is necessary to be known, hop'd, fear'd, expected, desired, or done, in reference to the Kingdom of grace and glory he never fails us in.

Not, thirdly, as other spirits that never teach all truth and nothing else, whose truths are commonly mixt with error, but what he teaches is truth *all*. By this you know that it is his Spirit, 'tis he that teaches every part, when the doctrine is *all* truth. The doctrines of the world are like those bastard children in *Nehemiah, xiii. 24.* that spake half *Asbdod*, and half *Israel*; one part of them is truth, the other falshood; one part *Scripture*, the other a *Romance*; one part spirit, the other flesh; one part Heaven, the other Earth, earthly humors and respects, and nothing else. There is not an Error or Heresie so gross or impudent, but
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has *Jacob's* voice though *Esaſau's* hands, speaks well what ere it does, speaks fair and smooth though its deeds be rough and cruel; with *Naphtali* gives good words, though with *Dan* it be as a Serpent by the way, and an Adder in the path that biteth the Horse heels, so that the Rider does fall backward, speaks well though it mean ill, and overthrow all that embrace it. Thus the *Anabaptist* says true, when he says the Apostles baptized men and women, but he says false, when he says none else, or that they baptized any twice with Christs baptism. The *Antinomian* and *Solifidian* say no more than truth, when they say faith justifies without the works of the Law, for they say with *St. Paul*; but they say a lie when they separate the works of the Gospel from that faith that justifies, if *St. James* say true, *Jam. ii. 26.* Innumerable multitudes of such half-fac'd truths there are abroad,, vented and vaunted by private spirits, such as this spirit has no hand in. *Every truth of his is truth in all its parts*; all truth, though it be but one, keeps the analogie of faith inviolable, perfect correspondence with all the rest. So that now every truth of his is all truth, truth all of it; but that's not all, for (4.) there is not a truth necessary or convenient for us to know but in due time he reveals it to us, unless we hinder him, *all things* says Christ in another place, *St. John xiv. 26.*

V. But all this while, to whom is all this promis'd, this guiding Spirit into all truth; to whom is it? To whom but *you*; *You*, says the Text, What you Apostles only? no such matter; you *Disciples* present then? no such matter neither: 'Tis but a little word this *you*, yet of large extent, few letters in it, but much spirit: You *Believers*, all of you, as well as you *Apostles*. For for all he prays in the next Chapter, *ver. 20.* for all that should believe on him *through their word*. And 'tis promis'd *St. John xiv. 16.* that he shall abide with them for ever; and if ever, sure then beyond their *persons* and *their* times; So that to ours too, is the promise made, or it cannot be for ever.

To the *Apostles* indeed in greater measure, after a more eminent way, with miracles and wonders to confirm the truth he taught, yet to us also after our measure.

To them to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever he had said unto them, *St. John xiv. 26.* Whence we read so often, they remembered his words, *St. Luke xxiv. 8.* *Acts i. 16.* remembered what he said, *St. John ii. 22.* remembered what was done unto him, *St. John xii. 16.*

To them (2.) to guide them into the understanding of old Types and Prophecies, what was any where said or written, or meant of him, *St. John xii. 16.*

To them (3.) to explain and manifest what they before either did not understand, or made a question of.

To them (4.) to teach them those things which till he (this Spirit) came they could not bear, as it is just before the Text.

To them (5.) to settle the Rites and Ceremonies, the Discipline and Government of the Church, to take order about things indifferent, *Acts xv. 28.* It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost and to us, to define things not before commanded: Of these Christ had given no commandment, we read of none, *St. Paul* professes he had received none about them, *i Cor. vii. 25.* yet he determines them, and tells us, he thought also he had the Spirit of God, *ver. 40.* even to those truths as well as others does the Spirits guiding reach.

To them the Spirit came to guide them into all these kinds of truths;

to us to guide us in them, or guide us after them, in a larger sense into them too. However to one effect it comes, we and they have the same truth from the same Spirit; the way only, that, is different, they immediately from the Spirit, we mediate by their Writings dictated to them by the Spirit. This now guides me to the way and manner of his guiding, which comes next to be considered, and must be fetcht both from the nature of the word, and the manner of his coming, for after that manner is his guiding, as after he comes so he will guide too.

VI. From the word first. And the word here for guiding is ἡγήσασθαι. Now in ἡγήσασθαι there is first, ἡγε, and then ἄγω, first way, then motion in it. He first sets us down a way that will bring us into the truth, then acts or moves us in it.

The first way or means is the word of God. Thy word is a light unto my feet, and a lanthorn to my paths, says holy David, Psal. cxix. 105. All Scripture is given by inspiration, says St. Paul, and is profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Inspir'd purposely by this Spirit to be a way to guide us into all truth and goodness. But this may all pretend to, and every one turns it how he lists. We must adde a second.

And the second is the Church, for we must know this, says St. Peter, know it first too, 2 Pet. i. 20. That no Scripture is of any private interpretation. There are some things so hard to be understood both in St. Pauls Epistles, and also other Scriptures, says he, that they that are unlearned and unstable wrest them unto their own destruction, 2 Tim. iii. 16. and therefore presently his advice follows, to beware least we be led away with that error, the error, as he calls it, of the wicked, and so fall from our own stedfastness, ver. 17. When men unlearned or ungrounded, presume to be interpreters, or even learned men to prefer their private senses before the received ones of the Church, 'tis never like to produce better. The pillar and ground upon which truth stands and stays is the Church, if St. Paul may be allowed the judge, 1 Tim. iii. 16. The pillar and ground of truth. In matters of discipline when a brother has done disorderly, tell it to the Church, says Christ, St. Mat. 18. 17. and if he neglect to hear that, let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and as a Publican. He is no Christian. In matters (2.) of doubt and controversie, send to the Church, to Hierusalem, to the Apostles and Elders there conven'd in Counsel, and let them determine it, so we find it done, Acts xv. 2, 28. In a lawful and full assembly of the learned Fathers of the Church such shall be determined, that's the way to settle truth. In matters (3.) of Rites and Ceremonies the Spirit guides us also by the Church. If any man seem to be contentious about them, St. Pauls appeal is presently to the Churches Customs We have no such custom neither the Churches of God, that's answer enough full and sufficient thinks the Apostle, 1 Cor. xi. 16. If the Churches custom be for us, then 'tis good and true we think, or speak, or do. If against us, 'tis all naught and wrong, whatever purity or piety be pretended in it. Nay, so careful was the Apostle to preserve the publick Authority of the Church, and beat down all private ways and fancies (by which ways only Schism and Heresie creep in) that he tells Timothy, though a Bishop, and one well read and exercised in the Scriptures from a child, 2 Tim. iii. 14. of a form of sound words he would have even him hold fast to, 2 Tim. i. 13. and the Romans he tells of a form of Doctrine to be obeyed, Rom. 6. 17. so far was that great and eloquent Apostle from being against forms, any forms of the Church, (though he could have

have prayed and preached *ex tempore* with the best, had tongues and eloquence, and the gift of interpretation to do it too) so far from leaving truth to any private interpretation, or sudden motion whatsoever. Nor is this appeal to the Fathers any whit strange or in Christian Religion only first to be heard of, it was Gods direction from the first. *For ask now, says Moses, of the days that are past, that were before thee, Deut. iv. 32. Stand you in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, says God, Jer. vi. 16.* As if he had said, Look about, and see, and examine all the ways you can, yet the old way that's the good one. *For enquire, I pray thee, of the former Age, and prepare thy self to the search of their Fathers, for we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, Job viii. 8.* See how slightly things of yesterday, new interpretations, new devices, new guides are accounted of. And indeed in it self 'tis most ridiculous to think the custom, and practice, and order, and interpretation of all times and Churches should be false, and those of yesterday only true, unless we can think the Spirit of truth has been fifteen or sixteen hundred years asleep, and never wak'd till now of late, or can imagine that Christ should found a Church, and promise to be with it to the end of the World, and then leave it presently to Antichrist to be guided by him for above fifteen hundred years together. Nor can I see why the Spirit of truth should now of late only begin to move and stir, except I should think he were awak'd, or delighted with noise and fury. Nor is it reasonable to conceive a few private Spirits, neither holier nor wiser than others, (for ought appears) nor arm'd with Miracles to confirm their Doctrines, should be more guided by the Spirit of truth, than the whole Church and succession of Christians, and Christian Fathers, especially wherein at any time they agree.

Yet (3.) not always to go so high. *Thou ledest thy people like sheep, says the Psalmist, by the hand of Moses and Aaron, Psal. lxxvii. 20.* Moses and Aaron were the Governours of the Church, the one a Priest, the other a Prophet; by such God leads his People, by their lawful Pastours and Teachers. The one, the Civil Governour, is the cloud to cover them from the heat: The other, the Spiritual, is the light to lead them in the way. The first protects, the other guides us; and we are bid to obey them, *those especially that watch for our souls, Heb. xiii. 17. Such as labour in the Word and Doctrine, 1 Tim. v. 17.* By such as God sets over us in the Church, to teach and guide us into truth, we must be guided if we will come into it. In things *unlawful* nor one nor other is to be obeyed; In things *indifferent* they always are; In things *doubtful* 'tis our safest course to have recourse to *them*, provided that they be not of *Corahs* company, that they exalt not themselves against *Moses* and *Aaron*, nor draw us to it. If they do, we may say to them as *Moses* did to those, *Ye take too much upon you you Sons of Levi.* God leads his People like a flock in peace and unity, and by the hands of *Moses* and *Aaron*. Thus (3.) the Spirit guides into all truth, because the Spirit is God, and God so guides.

You have heard the way and means, the first part of *ὁδοῦ ἡγεῖν*, or the Spirits guiding. The *Second* follows, his act and motion.

1. He *leads* or *guides* us only, he does not drive us, that's not the way to plant truth, by force and violence, fire and fagots, not the Spirits sure, which is the Spirit of love.

2. Yet *αἰνεῖ* there is we told you in it. Some *Act* of the Spirit, He moves and stirs up to it, enlightens our understandings, actuates our

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wills, disposes ways and times, occasions and opportunities to it, that's the reason we hear the truth more willingly at some time than other. *Paul* may plant, *Apollo* water, but the increase is this Spirit of Gods; when all is done, that man can do, he must have his act, or it will not be done.

3. He leads on *fair* and *easily*, for *diducet*, it is no *Jehu's* pace, that pace is only for an earthly kingdom, not an heavenly. The Spirit leads softly on, like *Jacob*, Gen. xxxiv. 14. according as the Cattel and Children are able to endure, according as our inferiour powers signified by the Cattel, and our new begun piety and capacities intimated by the Children are able to follow. 'Tis danger, else, we lose them by the way. He that presses even *truth* and piety too fast upon us, is liker to tire us, and make us give out by the way, than to lead us out to our journeys end. By degrees it is that even the greatest perfection must be come to. Truths are to be scattered as men are able to bear them. Christs own method in the verse before. *The way into all truth is by some and some.*

4. This guiding is by *teaching*; one Translation has *docebit*, shall teach, and *Chap. xiv. 26.* it is so too; he shall teach you, teach us the necessity of a Teacher. *How shall they hear without a Preacher?* Rom. x. 14. To this purpose the Spirit set *Teachers* in the Church, 1 Cor. xii. 28. *Pastours and Teachers*, Eph. iv. 11. Pastors to rule, Teachers to teach, both to guide us into the truth. Yea, but Teachers we now have store, that to be sure guide not into the truth, for they teach contraries and contradictions. What Teachers then are they that teach the truth? *Such as be sent*, says St. Paul, Rom. x. 15. sent by them that have authority to send them, if they come without authority, or from a false one, from them that never receive'd power themselves to send others, though they were sent themselves, they are not sent by the Spirit, and though they may guide now and then into a truth, teach something that is true, into all they cannot, their very Function is a lie, and their preaching of it.

5. Leading or guiding into all truth as one, *omnem veritatem* in the Singular, will tell us that unity is his way of guiding. *No truth in division*; we cannot so much as see our faces true in the clearest water if it be troubled; cast but a stone in, and divide its surface, and you spoil your seeing true; cast but a stone of division into the Church, and no seeing truth. 'Tis the spiritual man that only truly discerns and sees the truth, the natural and carnal man he cannot, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. And if there be *Divisions or Schisms among you are you not carnal?* says St. Paul in the next Chapter, 1 Cor. iii. 3. Yes, you are; so the *Schismatick*, or he that causes rents and divisions in the Church is but a carnal man, for all his brags, and cannot see the truth how much soever he pretend it. 'Twere well if men would think of this, we were likely then the sooner to see truth, to be guided into all truth if we could once keep all together, peace and truth go both together.

Thus far one word has led you: The Connexion of that and the other with the former, of his guiding with his coming, will lead you further. When *He, the Spirit of truth, is come*, then *he will guide you*, When *he is come*, is, when he is so grounded and settled in us that we can say he is come indeed, he is in us of a truth, then all truth will follow presently. When the holy Spirit has once taken up his lodging in us, that we also begin to be holy Spirits too, then truth comes on amain. *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God*, St. Joh. vii. 17. till

till our hearts be well fram'd to the obedience of Gods Commandments no truly knowing truth. Divine knowledge is contrary to other knowledges, they begin in speculation and end in action; this begins with action, and ends in speculation, seeing and knowing God, *what man is he that feareth the Lord, him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose*, Psal. xxv. 11. When the Spirits holiness is come into us, his truth will follow as fast as we can bear it, till we come to the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ, to Christ himself that is the Truth; the way now to come to the knowledge of truth is by holiness and true obedience. Nor yet so to be understood, as if the good man only knew the truth, or that every one that has Christ, or the Spirit dwelling in them were the only knowing men, and therefore fit only to teach others. Indeed if you take knowledge for practical and saving knowledge so it is, no man knows God but he that loves him, no man so knows truth but he that loves and follows it, and no man is saved by knowing, but by doing it. But that which may serve to save a mans self will not serve to save others, to bring them to salvation. 'Twas one of *Corah Dathan and Abirams* Doctrines indeed, *Numb. xvi. 3. All the Congregation is holy every one of them, wherefore then do you Moses and Aaron lift up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord?* Why do you Priests lift up your selves so much to think you only are fit to teach and rule the people? *But the earth opened her mouth*, ver. 30. and confuted the madness of these men. Be the person never so holy, if he have no Function to it he must not presume to teach others though he must teach himself. Holiness is one gift, the power of teaching is another, though both from the same Spirit; and no venturing upon *Aarons*, *St. Pauls*, or *St. Peters* Office, unless the Spirit has set us apart to that end and purpose. 'Tis enough for any other that he has truth enough to save himself: and 'tis but Ambition, Presumption, and Sacrilege, and by that a lessening of his goodness, to pretend to that which God has not call'd him to, but his own preposterous zeal, or too high conceit of his own holiness and abilities, and so far from being like to guide into all truth, that our own days are sufficient witnesses all Errors and Heresies have sprung from it.

The way that the Spirit guides into all his truth is by the Scripture interpreted by the Church, by the decrees, and determinations, and customs of it; by the hand of our lawful Pastors and Teachers, himself inwardly acting and moving in us, inwardly working and perswading us, outwardly ministring opportunities and occasions to us, leading us by degrees, preserving us in peace, keeping us in obedience, and holiness, and charity. Thus he guides into all truth, ordinarily, and no way else.

VII. And to be sure, lastly, *thus* he will. Christ here promises for him him that he *shall*, for so we may render it, *He shall*. And he is the Spirit of truth, says the Text. So he will make good what Christ has promised, and what *he* comes to be, the guide into the way of truth. We need not either mistrust or fear it. For though Christ himself must go away and leave us, because it is expedient that he should, yet this Spirit will stand by us howsoever. *Howbeit* he will. He is a mighty wind, and will quickly disperse and blow away the mists of ignorance and error; He is a fire, and will easily purge the dross, and burn up the chaff that mixes with the truth, and hides or sullies it; nothing can stand before him, nothing shall. He comes to us with a *Howbeit*, a *non obstante*, be it how it will, though we be blind, and ignorant, and foolish, and full of infirmities and sins, so we be willing, he will come and guide us.

Yet if now we will so be guided, to close up all, We must, lastly, submit our selves wholly to his way and guiding, to the truth, and to all of it.

To his *way* and *order*, (1.) no teaching him how he should teach us. *Them that be meek shall he guide in judgment, and such as be gentle them shall he learn his way*, Psal. xxv. 8. No teaching without humility, we must be willing to be guided or he will not guide us. Men will not now, thence come so many errors and mistakes.

To *truth* too (2.) we must submit. If it be truth no quarrelling against it. No seeking shelters and distinctions to defend us from it: though we have been long in error, and count it a dishonour to revoke it, revoke it we must, be it what it will, or we endanger the loss of the whole truth, the Spirit will not lead us.

And to *all* (3.) too. We must not plead our interest, or any thing against it, be it never so troublesome, never so disadvantageous, never so displeasing, we must resolve to embrace it, because 'tis truth.

With this submission too we are now to come to the holy *mysteries*, submit our hearts, and judgments, and affections here, not to presume to pry too much into the way and manner of Christs and the Spirits being there, but to submit our reasons to our faith; and open our hearts to Christ as well as our mouths to the outward elements, and keep under our affections by holy and godly doing, that so the Spirit of truth may come into them all. And so doing, the Spirit will come, and he will guide us, guide us into all necessary and saving truths, guide us to Christ, guide us to God, guide us here, and guide us hence, guide us in earth, and guide us to heaven.

THE

THE FOURTH SERMON UPON Whitsunday.

ACTS ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sate upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.



THE words are the History for the day. The day the anniversary for the words. This day the Text fulfilled in the ears of some of every Nation under Heaven, ver. 5. remembred and celebrated by the tongues and voices of the Christian Church throughout the Earth. The things done here the reason of the day, and the day the memorial of them. Here you may see why we keep this Feast, why 'tis so solemn; why 'tis one of the *dies albi*, why so white a day, a Sunday white with the light of that holy fire that this day came down from Heaven, and sate like rays of light upon the *Apostles*, those whitest and purest sons of light, the *Holy Ghost* the third *Person* of the blessed *Trinity* descending miraculously in it upon the *Disciples*, as it were a sudden rushing mighty wind filling all the corners both of the place and of their souls, and so seating himself in the form of fiery cloven tongues upon each of that holy company, and thereby giving them new hearts and words to speak the wonders of the most High.

A business we are this day to be their *Disciples* in, to use our tongues to the same purpose, that we may testify our selves to be led by the same Spirit, breath by the same breath, move by the same wind, our hearts warm'd by the same fire, our words fram'd by the same tongues that this day appear'd so miraculously upon *them*.

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We have done so in the unity of the Church several times before in the year for *Christ* the second *Person* of the *Godhead*, do we so now also for the *third*; the benefits and glory which this day came from him, which they this day did after a strange miraculous way receive, we may this day also receive in an efficacious way, though not externally and visibly, yet internally and invisibly from the same *Spirit*. For this Feast is his, and our speech this day principally of him, and our praises for him.

Now the best way to keep the Feast, so as to be partakers of the honour and benefits of it, is to place our selves in the same fashion, set our selves in the same posture, dispose our selves after the same order with them here, both for the receiving of him, and after we have received him. For 'tis part of the *Epistle*, not the *Gospel* that I have read you, and the business of the *Epistle* is commonly Doctrine and Instruction, as the matter of the *Gospel* is usually history. So we then to be instructed by it, how to demean our selves for the receiving of the Holy Spirit, how to know how and where, and when it is he comes, how to distinguish him and his coming from other *spirits*, what to do also when we have received him, and when more especially to do the one or expect the other by the pattern and example in the Text. This will prove the best, the only celebration of the Feast, the most glorious manifestation this day on our parts for the more glorious manifestation this day on Gods; the manifestation of our thankfulness for the manifestation of Gods goodness.

Thus without either nicety or much Art; I shall divide you the Text into these Particulars:

1. The *Disposition* of *them*, that the *Spirit* comes and lights upon, them that are all with one accord in one place, that are there quietly sitting and expecting Christ there, especially upon the solemn days, upon the day of *Pentecost*, a solemn Festival.
2. The way and manner and order of the Holy *Spirits* coming, suddenly, from Heaven, like a sound thence, like the sound of a rushing mighty wind filling all the house, in the appearance of cloven fiery tongues sitting upon each on whom he comes.
3. The effect and issue immediately upon it. They are filled, all filled, filled with *Ghost* and *Spirit*, the Holy Ghost or Spirit, begin to speak, speak strangely, strange tongues too, yet in measure and order too no other then the *Spirit* gives them utterance.
4. And lastly, though first it be in the Text, yet because it is but the circumstance and time of the story, and not the main business or second of it, and fittest to close up all in good time and order, The Time when all this was done, when these things came to pass, when the *Apostles* were so dispos'd, when the Holy Ghost thus descended, when this strange issue fell out, when the day of *Pentecost* was fully come, in very good time, the promis'd time, Christs time, Gods own time, such as he had prefigur'd them in in the *Law* too, at the fifty days Feast after the *Pasover*, a solemn day and somewhat more, as you shall hear anon. Thus we best join the History and the Moral, the Doctrine and Use of *Pentecost* or *Whitsunday*; nay, the very Holy Spirit of the day, and our souls to day together, that we may not be like men that only come to hear news, a story and away, but such as hear the Word and profit by it.

Which that we may, Come O mighty wind and blow upon us, Descend

scend O *holy Fire* and warm our hearts, give me a tongue, O blessed Spirit, out of this days number and *utterance*, give thy servants capacious spirits and remembrance, that thy Word may rush in upon them as a *sound from Heaven*, and fill the houses of all our souls with joy and gladness with holy fire of Piety and Devotion, that we may with one accord, one heart and mind speak forth thy praise and glory.

The *first* Point in the order I have set you, is the *disposition* of them that the Holy Spirit will come and light upon. (1.) They are of *one accord*, (2.) in *one place*, (3.) *sitting* quietly and expecting there, and that (4.) also upon the *solemn* day, when the day of *Pentecost*, any solemn day or occasion is presented them.

They are first of *one accord* whom this *Spirit* vouchsafes to descend into. This unity draws the Spirit to them, that keeps it with them, the house of unity is the only Temple of the Spirit of Unity. That soul which breaks the bond of unity, and divides it self from the Church of Christ, from the company of the Apostles and their Successors, the still Fathers of it, cannot hold this holy wind, cannot enclose this holy fire, they are broken and crackt, crack only of the Spirit, but are really broken from that body in which only the Spirit moves. Take and divide a member from the body, be it the principal, that in which most spirit was, the heart or the head, and once divided, the Spirit vanishes from it, will not sit nor dwell in it: just so is it in Christs Body the Church. If one of the chiefest members of it, one erst while of the devoutest and most religious in it, once grow so proud of his own wisdom or gifts, so singular in his conceits as to separate himself from his fellows, from that body whereof Christ is the head, he goes away like a member from the natural body, and leaves the Spirit behind him, *that* retires from him, for it is one Spirit, and cannot be divided from the body, though it work diversly in it.

If, this being of one accord, of one mind, be the temper for the receipt of the Holy Spirit, as here you see it is, and in reason it can be no otherwise, it being the Spirit of love and unity: What spirit are they of, Whose Religion is Faction, whose chief pretended Piety is *Schism*, whose business is to differ from all the World? Nothing can be more evident, than that men are now adays much at a loss for the *Spirit*, however every one claim to it, seeing there is no accord, but discord, not diversities only but contrarieties, but contradictions amongst them that most pretend the *Spirit*.

Indeed were this *they* any less a *They* than the *Apostles* themselves, and the whole number of the then Disciples, or had there been but the least division among them either about the manner of staying or expecting Christs Promise, or which is less about the place to stay in; It may be these men might have had a shadow for their separations: but *Apostles* they were, and in *one place* they were too altogether, agreed in all, were all in unity, were all in uniformity; not their minds only, but their bodies too together. Men thought it nothing a while since to withdraw themselves from the Houses of God, as if no matter at all for the place, they could for all that be of the same faith, but too woful experience has prov'd it now, that with the one place the one faith is vanisht, with the ceremony the substance gone too, with the uniformity of Worship, the unanimity of our minds and the uniformity of our faith too blown into the air. How shall we do, O blessed *spirit*, in so many crackt vessels to retain thee? Needs must the Spirit expire out of that body which
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has so many breaches and divisions in it, so many divided houses, so many broken Churches, so many rotten Congregations.

I know if it be only necessity divides us, and drives us into several dens and caves, as it did the *Primitive* Christians in the days of those fiery persecutions, that the Holy Spirit will ransack all the crannies and search out all the privatest corners be they above ground or under it, but it is because the mind of all those several places is but one, and in that respect they are no more than so many several *cells* of the one *Catholic Church*, but where choice and not necessity, wilfulness and not force, singularity and not purity of Truth or Conscience makes the division, and draws Disciples into Chambers, Parlors, *Barns*, or *Mills*, Woods or Desarts, *go not* says Christ *out after them*, say they what they will of Christ or Spirit there, believe it not, St. *Matth.* xxix. 26. *Two in a field, and yet one taken and the other left, two at the mill, and one taken and the other left*, ver. 40. So at the most, I fear, great hazard that any, if they be no better, no more orderly gather'd when the *Master* comes.

Or were they yet perhaps in several places sitting as they are here, that is *quietly*, and in true peace and faith, expecting the promise of their Lord, something might be said to excuse their separations, but not only actually to break the unity of the Spirit and the bond of Peace, but to breath out nothing but war, contention and dispute, to be so far from sitting down and either suffering for Christ, or humbly expecting his time of assistance and deliverance out of their perplexities and discomforts, as to take the matter into their own hands, and prevent the coming of the Spirit of Peace, by rising and raising spirits of war and confusion, they must give me leave to tell them, they know not *what spirit they are of*, a heady, giddy, furious spirit, *zeal* I bear them witness with St. *Paul*, *Rom.* x. 2. without *knowledge*, and spirit without holiness, for the *Spirit of the Prophets is subject to the Prophets*, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 32. much more to the God of the Prophets, to his time and order.

And yet there is another disposition to be observed in those upon whom the good Spirit lights, to make either instruments of glory to the Church, or Piety to God. 'Tis sitting and *expecting*, if you mark it, till the *day* or days of *Pentecost* be fully come and accomplisht; souls willing to keep a *holy-day* or *holy-days* to the Lord; neither to be scar'd from the attendance of their Master and their Devotions, nor to be shortned and interrupted in their pious course of faith and piety by the now so terrible scare-crows of set Feasts, as *Jewish*, legal and superstitious observances, as the new *zelots* are so wise to term them, because they understand not terms or times. The spiritual man (if they be what they boast) discerns the things of God, though hidden in darker mysteries, knows better to distinguish *Judaism* from Christianity, Piety from Superstition, and is not only content, but studies to wait upon his Lord upon any day, glad to get it too, *Pasover* or *Pentecost*, makes use of them all, and turns them fairly from their old *Judaism*, and consecrates them anew to his Masters service: and this doing, the very *Spirit* himself authorizes and abets, whilst he thus seems to pick out the time for his own coming at the *Jewish Pentecost*, so to sanctifie a new Christian *Pentecost*, the Christian *Whitsuntide*, to all Christian Generations by this solemn glory of his benefits to day to be remembred for ever.

Thus we have the disposition he vouchsafes to descend upon, *unanimous*, *uniform*, *peaceable*, *orderly expecting* souls. Such as set apart and keep days to God with faith and patience, and in obedience and order; the
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contrary tempers are too rough lodgings for the Spirit of meekness, order and peace; be we so prepar'd and he will come.

II. Now see we how he comes, the manner of the Holy Spirits coming. Double it is, to the ear and to the eye. To the ear first; and that (1.) *suddenly*, from Heaven *secondly*; (3.) *like a sound* thence, (4.) *the sound of a rushing mighty wind*; that (5.) *filled all the house*, yet (6.) *the house only where they sate*; thus to the ear: Then (2.) to the eye in the *appearance of tongues, cloven tongues, tongues of fire, tongues sitting*; and lastly, *sitting upon each of them*.

We take first what came first, the *sound*; and that first was *sudden*, suddenly says the Text, yet as sudden as it came, go it shall not so, not without a note or two.

Suddenly then it came, to shew the *freeness* of Gods grace, so far above desert, that it is also above apprehension, it out-runs that, and is upon us ere we are aware; so little probability have we to deserve it, that we commonly have not time to do it: and when we have, yet so suddain does it fall, that we may well see it comes not from our selves, so dull a piece as earth and sin has made us.

To shew (2.) the *readiness* of his goodness, beyond expectation, readier far to give than we to take, comes commonly upon us sooner then we expect or wish, *prevents us with his goodness*, as the *Psalmist* observes to us, Psal. xxi. 3. and runs very swiftly, Psal. cxlvii. 15. flying upon the *wings of the wind*, Psal. civ.

To shew us (3.) the vanity of men who think it comes with *observation*. It does not says Christ, St. Luke xvii. 20. 'Tis not at our command. The *Prophets* themselves could not Prophesie when they listed, 'twas *cecidit Spiritus*, the Spirit fell upon them, the common phrase in Scripture, and then they prophesied, till that fell (and fall it did but at times, what times it pleased) the motions of the Prophet were but as other mens. Indeed I remember *Elisba* willing to prophesie to *Jehoshaphat* the King of *Judah*, 2 King. iii. 14, 15. calls for a Minstrel, and it came to pass that while the *Minstrel play'd the hand of the Lord came upon him*. Not that either the *Spirit* was at the will and under the power of the Minstrel or the Prophet, but to shew the disposition that the holy *Spirit* vouchsafes soonest and suddenest to come to, a sweet and tunable soul dispos'd to accord, to love and peace, and unity. And by the way you may take notice Musick and the Spirit are at no discord, as the late spiritual men (forsooth) would have us to believe; the *Prophet* you see thought it the only way and medium to raise his spirits into heavenly raptures, to make himself capable of new Inspirations to call for an Instrument of Musick, and as it were to perswade the heavenly *Spirit* down by some grave and sober Musick; which may make us wonder how these great pretenders to the Spirit, and gapers for it, should be so furious enemies against the Church Musick, so ever employ'd and approv'd both by God and his Prophets and Apostles, (for singing with melody, says St. Paul too, Ephes. v. 19.) to fit and sweeten, and raise our dull and rougher spirits to the service of Heaven and the entertainment of the heavenly and gentle motions of the Spirit in those holy performances. But all this while this is but to dispose our *selves*, the *Spirit* it self is at its own disposal for all this, and when he comes comes on a sudden.

Even to awake (4.) and rouse us up. We are drowsie souls to Heavenward, & want some sudden change to startle us; things that come leisurely will not do it. It must be a sudden turn that will turn us out of our selves, or from our follies, or so much upward.

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And sudden (5.) it is again to shew the activity of the Spirit of God, how *wonderful he is among the Children of men*; that he cannot only turn the world upside down when ere he please, but as soon as he pleases, does but *blow with his wind and the waters flow*, casts but a sudden glance of an eye at St. Peter and out run the waters out of his; he that was but just now afraid of the voice of a silly girl, fears not presently the lightnings and thunders of the greatest Tyrants. *Nox ut tetigerit mentem docet, solumque tetigisse docuisse est, Mram humanum subito ut illustrat immutat affectum, abnegat hoc repente quod erat, exhibet repente quod non erat, S. Greg.* He does but touch the mind and teaches it, shines into it and changes it together, forgets immediately what it was, and is what it was not. All the quickest ways of men must have time and leisure, be it but to cast an eye; but *O qualis est artifex iste Spiritus!* But how wonderful an Artist is thy Spirit O Lord, that knows not the least hinderance or delay, *αὐτὸν ὁφθαλμῷ*, it comes so suddenly, there is no appearance often of its coming, not so much as a whiff or shadow before it to give us warning of its approach, for this reason among the rest, least we should attribute any thing to our own preparations, yea, though they be such as God requires.

Sudden, last of all, to shew us our duties not to neglect the light and sudden motions of the Holy Spirit, though we know not how or when, or whence they rise, so we know but whether they go and lead us; if to good catch at them, let them not go as they came, but leap we into the water while it stirs; fan we our selves with this wind while it moves; for how long it will stay, or whether ever come again we know not; take it in the present while we may, omit no good motion, no opportunity or occasion of any doing well; suddenly it comes, and suddenly it may be gone if we lay not hold upon it and make use of it. Thus from the quickness and suddenness of this Spirits motion, Gods grace and goodness, his incomprehensible power and operation, and our readiness to lay hold upon it, are preached to us.

But from Heaven what next is preached to us? but that thence it is all holy winds and breaths, and spirits come; from Heaven, not of men; no humane wit can teach what this Spirit does, the *spirit of man* but the things of a man, 1 Cor. ii. 11. it knows no further; the things of Heaven from the Spirit of Heaven; *de Cælo*, from the very Heaven of Heavens, not any lower Heavens, or any other spirits of Heaven, but that which has no plural number, is but one, and is an Heaven it self; not only a Spirit of Heaven, but Heaven that is the Spirit, the Heaven in whom all of us live and move, and have our being as in our Heaven of Glory.

Yet again, from Heaven, that we may at any time know what wind blows in us; if our affections, intentions and endeavours are only towards Heaven, set upon Heaven and heavenly things, if what moves us be only heavenly and not earthly interests, then 'tis the good Spirit that reigns and rules in us, then 'tis the Wind and Spirit, and Fire and Tongue, a wind out of Gods own treasury, a Spirit out of Gods own bosom, a fire from that Eternal Light, a tongue from that Eternal Wisdom, but if our actions come but so much as collaterally and glancing at other respects than God and Heaven, 'tis no Spirit, no motion, no work of his Spirit, but some others; this comes directly straight from Heaven.

3. Now from Heaven, what is it that comes here? *there came suddenly*

denly a sound from Heaven : a sound ! yes a sound, and 'tis a good hearing, the best news we ever heard since Christs departure ; a sound that is gone out into all Lands, and into the end of the world. *Sonus cælorum*, the sound of the Heavens, the very true Pythagorical harmony of the Spheres, the sweetest sound was ever heard, the sound of the Gospel, of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the knowledge of it.

We perhaps lookt when we heard of something coming down from Heaven, for some glorious Host of Angels, *Cherubims* or *Seraphims*, some or other of them at least, or for the new *Hierusalem* we read of, *Rev.* xxi. 2. coming from above, down from God out of Heaven ; and we think much to be put off with a sound : yet I must tell you this sound sounds better in our ears, the sound of an Eternal Comforter that should abide with us for ever, and bring us in due time to that new *Hierusalem* and those blessed Spirits in Heaven.

And with a fitter convoy he could not come than with a sound, who was now to send and constitute such as should sound out the Gospel over all the World, so many Apostles, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers.

Nor yet of all sounds with any so correspondent to him could he come as that of the wind ; nothing more to express his Glory and Godhead, that this Spirit he, is that very he that *cometh riding upon the wings of the wind* ; a fit blast to stop the idle breath of those saucy enquirers of our age, who dispute this blessed Spirit out of his Deity.

Need had he appear it seems (4.) as a rushing *mighty wind* to rush down these enemies of his and overthrow them. Indeed he came to day with so mighty and powerful a blast, that we might see both his Power and Godhead, as well as his Mercy and Goodness to us ; his goodness in coming like a *wind*, his power in coming like a *rushing mighty* one.

The benefits we receive from the wind represent the benefits we receive from the *spirit*, and so (1.) present his goodness.

The Wind, first, purges and clears the Air from noisom and infectious vapours ; the *spirit* cleanses and purifies our souls and bodies from the stinking and unwholsom steams of sins and lusts.

(2.) The Wind sometimes gathers up clouds and rains, and sometimes scatters them again. The Holy *spirit* one while gathers clouds into the countenance, and brings showers into the eyes of the penitent sinner ; and other while it blows away all blackness from our faces and makes the soul look up, and the Spirits smile and dance in our hearts and eyes.

(3.) The Wind cheers and refreshes the Plants and Trees, the blessed *spirit* cheers the Plants of Grace within us, and makes them fructifie and prosper, puts life and spirit into the root, verdure and freshness into the leaf, fineness and subtilty into the relish of the fruit of all holy actions and virtues.

4. The Wind cools the heat, and revives the fainting spirit ; the Holy *spirit* does so too, allays the inordinate heat of concupiscence within us, cools the over-hotness and ardors of our Passions, revives us and recovers us when we are almost choakt with the fumes and flames of our own corruption, affections and lusts.

(5.) The Wind, again, kindles the fire, and blows the spark into a flame ; and the Holy Spirit it is that kindles all heavenly warmth and flames within us, without his breath we are all but dead coles.

(6.) The Wind scatters the chaff and skreens the dust out of the corn ; the Holy *spirit* blows away all our chaff, and dust, all our dross and rubbish,

our vanities and follies, and makes us fit corn for Gods own Garners.

(7.) The Wind it is that drives home the Ship into the Haven; and the Holy *Spirit* it is that drives our poor torn and tatter'd Vessels into the Haven where we would be, as the *Psalmist* speaks; drives us up and down over the troublesom Sea of this tempestuous World, into the Port of everlasting blifs, into the Haven of Heaven it self.

You see the goodness and graces of the Holy Spirit not unfitly expressed by the resemblance of the Wind. See we now his Power as well resembled by it, by the *rushing mighty wind*.

The Wind is but a thin and airy puff, so subtile that we cannot see it, yet what a rattling does it make? rattles the Ships of *Tharfis* together, tears up Trees by the roots, throws down Houses and Buildings; nay *rends the Mountains and breaks in pieces the Rocks before it*, 1 Kings xix. 11. But never did Wind so tear up Foundations by the roots, never did so strong Buildings fall before that tumultuous vapour, as this rushing mighty Wind that this day came down from Heaven hath cast down before it. All the high things of the earth, Wisdom and Learning, and Might and Majesty have faln as easily as so many Paper Turrets at its breath, all have given up themselves and thrown all prostrate at the Word of this *Spirit*, so that the whole World stood wondring and amaz'd to see it self so turn'd about by the meer words of a few simple Fishermen, without force, or eloquence, or craft, to see it self so tamely submit its glory to the humility of Christ, its greatness to his littleness, its majesty to his baseness, its wisdom to the foolishness of his Cross, its ease, pleasure, to the pains and patience of it. But *manus excelsi fecit hoc*; 'tis the hand of the most Highest that has done it, such a wind could come from none but God, such a Spirit can be none but his, none but he could do it, and it is marvellous in our eyes, his power as marvellous as his mercy, both of them above any created ones whatsoever.

Well may such a Wind as this now *fill the house*, as it follows in the fifth Consideration. And yet commonly the wind fills the open air and not the houses. Common winds do so indeed, but this peculiar Wind fills the house and every corner, comes in even when the doors are shut, or else opens and shuts them as it pleases; a sign 'tis more than air or airy spirit; 'tis he only that searches the hearts and reins, that can glide so into these close rooms of ours; and 'tis our happiness it is so, that he thus blows into the house of his own accord and power: For give me a Ship, says St. *Chrysostom*, with all its tackling, sails and anchors, spread all in order too, and let the wind lie still, let there be no gale stirring, and all its furniture and men are nothing; no more is the soul with all its preparations without the blowing of the *Spirit*; nay, no more is all our eloquence, all our arguments and perswasions, the subtilty of our understanding, the richness of our concept and notion, the sweetness of the voice, the rhetorick of words, the strength of reason, the whole tackling and furniture of the *Orator* or *Preacher*, unless the Spirit come and fill the sail, and stretch the canvas, and so drive on the Vessel. 'Tis this *implevit* we must hold by, 'tis this filling our empty house, our lank and lither sails that blows comfort to us.

And 'tis the enhancing of the benefit, which is the last considerable in this similitude of the wind, that it fills the house only where *they are sitting*. It is no ordinary or common favour that God vouchsafes in filling our houses with the Spirit; he hath not dealt so with any other Nation, with any other people than the Christian people. It is the Church only,
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and the souls of Christians in it, that this mighty wind as rushing and mighty as it is does content and contain it self in. All other houses and places stand empty, cannot get this Tenant. 'Tis the property of this Wind, and no other, to blow where it lists, in *this* house and no other, within *doors* all, within the Church, none without at all, or the sound of it only passes out to call others in, that they may see and wonder at the things that are come to pass this day, that *Jews* and *Proselytes*, *Cretes* and *Arabians*, *Parthians* and *Medes*, and all Nations under Heaven may bear witness of the wonder; and if they come in, in some sort partake of it too, of the wind, though not of the tongues, of some graces of the *Spirit*, though not of the other. Only come in they must, into the Church of Christ, which is his body, before their veins be filled with this *Spirit*, before they feel any motion of it.

Of the *wind* I say, such a portion of the Spirit as may breath into them the breath of life; but tongues of fire are for those only who were sitting there before, sitting as Governors of the Church, to whom that baptism of fire was promised, who were bid to tarry and expect it, and when so enabled, to go abroad then and use their tongues, and blow the flames of divine love and charity through the World.

I should now proceed to these miraculous tongues, the second representment of the Holy Spirit. And methinks I am unwilling to leave them unspoken of, to which we owe our speech. But your ears are already filled with the wind, yet I hope 'tis the proper wind of the day, and the sound of it shall not vanish as the wind, as ordinary winds and sounds, nor my words as the soft air.

So much the rather in that this Point of the *wind* comes more home to us than that other of the *tongues*. Tongues were for them that believe not says the *Apostle*, but the Wind, the rushing mighty Wind from Heaven to cast down all the strong holds of Sin and Satan, for them that believe, even for us all. The fiery tongues concern the *Apostles* as a miraculous enabling of them to the work of the Apostleship, to the preaching and divulging the Gospel of Christ: but the breath and blowing of the *Spirit* concerns all Christians whatsoever, under every notion. To that, *our* proper tenure is from this Wind, nay so much the more, because it is the breath of the *Spirit*, not the tongue that makes us Christian; the wind like that in *Ezekiel*, quickens our dead bones into the life of Christ, and by it we live to our own Salvation; by the tongues only to anothers. So having gotten our share already in this Wind from Heaven, we may the easier bear the deferring of the discourse of the tongues thence.

And truly if we can now get the Spirit to blow upon these dead elements, and quicken them to us into the body and blood of Christ, we shall quickly by the vertue of that blood of the Vine speak with new tongues, the Spirit will give utterance, and we shall sing the praises of the Lord.

That should be indeed the whole business of our tongues to day, to be as loud as the loudest wind in our Thanksgivings; O ye winds of God, bless ye the Lord, say the three Children in the fire; O ye Children of the Lord, bless ye the Lord in the wind say I, in this mighty rushing Wind, acknowledge his goodness, admire his power, confess his praise, who thus blows the sparks of grace up in us, who clenches our souls from all impure airs and vapours, who scatters the clouds of sorrow, shews us the fairest face of Heaven; who cools and refreshes, and revives and purges us, and wafts us to our heavenly Countrey by this holy *wind*, who daily does wondrous things in us, and for us, and by us, through the mighty rushings

ings of it, and fills and replenishes us, with all the benefits and comforts of it, whilst he passes by others without so much as a breathing on them.

Yet the business would be how to catch this wind, and serve our uses of it. Why! in the Word and in the Sacraments, and by Prayers we may have it, and be filled with it. Come then and fill your souls; you have heard the Word already, treasure it up, (for there are treasures for the winds) and you shall feel it blow, move and stir in you. The blessed *sacrament* is a second way to be filled with this *spirit*, 'tis reacht out and proffer'd to us there; we may there take it into our mouths as before into our ears, and it will rush down all before it that stands against it, down it will into our bowels and fill us with all heavenly fulness: And then draw it in and breath it out we may by devout and holy Prayers; only remember always the disposition of that soul this *spirit* only will abide with, peace and unity. Thus dispos'd you must be to receive the *spirit*, thus dispos'd to receive the *Sacrament*; and then the Spirit will descend upon our Sacrifice, and the wind of Gods benediction upon our offering, and we shall return hence with mighty rushings in us, the rushing down of sin, the raising up of grace, mighty mighty things will be done in us by the power of this *spirit*, and this *wind*, and as it came from Heaven, so thither will it back again and carry us upon its wings to keep a perpetual Feast, an Eternal Whitfunday, all in the white Robes of everlasting Glory.

Blow O blessed *wind* upon us this day; blow away our chaff and dross, and dust out of our performances, breath into thy holy mysteries the breath of a life-giving life, rush down all our sins before thee; purifie and cleanse and refresh, and revive and comfort us by thy saving breath, that this wind may bring us good, all the good of Heaven and Earth, fill both our ears and hearts here with sounds and songs of joy, and hereafter with *Hallelujahs* for evermore.

T H E

THE FIFTH SERMON UPON Whitsunday.

ACTS ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sate upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.



When the day of Pentecost here was fully come, ver. 1. they were all filled, says the Text, ver. 4. and began to speak. Now the day is fully come again, we also are full of matter (as Elihu told Job, Job xxxii. 18.) and we must speak. For 'tis a day of Tongues, a day to speak in, and a day to speak of too, to speak magnalia in it, and of it, of the great things of God, and the great things of the day, the wonderful works of God, ver. 11. which were this day wrought by the descent of the holy Spirit. To this end the Spirit descended, to this end the Tongues came, to this end both appeared, that we might learn to use our Tongues and Spirits to set forth his praise, every one according as the Spirit gives him utterance according to the gift and place that God has given him; we, as the Apostles and Ministers of the Spirit; you, as Disciples to be taught by us; you, to ask with those hearers, ver. 37. Men and brethren what shall we do? We, as St. Peter, ver. 38. to tell you what to do; we, faithfully to preach the Word, the remission of sins, and the gifts of the holy Ghost, ver. 38. you, gladly to receive it, ver. 41. we, to begin the Anthem, you, to make the Chorus for the service of this days solemnity; both of us to bear our parts to day in praises and thanksgivings, for the benefits we receive from this days business.

We have the last year begun to speak of it out of this Text, we begin again

again to speak of it hence this year, shall do as the Spirit shall give us utterance. To hold our peace to day were to sin against the *Spirit*, who this day gave us all our tongues to speak. And I hope nor we nor you will be silent of his glory, no such evil shall befall us.

For a day of good tidings it is, was so when it came first, will be so now it come again, and whenever it comes about, was so to the Disciples, will be so I hope to us to hear the voice of a Comforter, to see his appearance, or but hear of it. The Text is the Story of it. The Relation of the coming of the Comforter, the descent of the *Holy Ghost*. In it, when time was, we observed these four Particulars :

I. The *disposition* of them the Spirit comes upon.

II. The *way*, and *manner*, and order he comes after.

III. The *Effect* and *Issue* that comes upon it. And

IV. The *Time* when it came to pass.

I. The *disposition* of those the Spirit comes upon is such as makes men to be of one accord, that brings them all to one place, upon such days as *Pentecost*, on the solemn feasts, makes them then and there sit quietly, and orderly expecting Christ, a unanimous, Church-like, orderly, devout, and religious disposition. Upon such, and such only, is it that the holy Spirit comes.

II. The *way*, *manner*, and *order* of his coming is as a *mighty wind*, and like as *fire*. Suddenly he came, came as a sound, as a sound from heaven, as a sound of a rushing mighty wind, and such a one too as filled all the house. Came (2.) as fire, as tongues of fire, as cloven tongues of fire, such fire yet as sate upon them and did no hurt, heavenly and celestial fire. Thus he came to day.

III. The *Effect* and *Issue* is filling, the filling of all that then were present with ghost and spirit, *Holy-Ghost* and spirit, then with words, and tongues, and speech, even according to the measure or pleasure of the Spirit. This the issue of the holy Spirits coming, fulness, and spirit, and ability, and utterance, new hearts, and new spirits, new languages, and sobriety to use them.

IV. The *time*, the Time of *Pentecost*, when it was fully come, when all was ready, persons, and place, and time fully disposed and fit, then comes the holy Spirit, then came all these things to pass. I put this last, though it stands first, that I might close up all at least in good time and order.

There wants nothing now, O blessed Spirit, to go on and finish, but that thou shouldst come and order all our thoughts and spirits, that we may humbly receive the sound of thy holy Word; that I thy servant may have utterance, this thy people give thee audience, all of us obedience, and all our hearts and tongues be so thorowly heated with thy holy fire, that they may be filled with thy praise and honour all the day long.

That we may do so, here are tongues given in the Text, *ver. 3. Cloven tongues, as it were, of fire*; there we left, there we begin again, at the second Way and Manner of the holy Spirits coming down to day. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sate upon each of them. Where (1.) of the Order; (2.) Of the Appearance; (3.) Of the Manner it self; And lastly, of the Continuance of it.

For the Order, 'tis the second way of the Spirits coming here, first in the *wind*, then in the *fire*. The holy fire within us is not kindled but with a mighty wind. The divine spark or soul cannot be blown up into a fire
till

till some mighty wind has shaken all our powers, blown off the dust and ashes, those earthly, worldly affections that choak'd and cover'd it, till it has rais'd a tumult in all the corners of us, dispers'd the vanities and irregularities of all our motions, and scatter'd every thing that hinder'd it from the obedience to the Spirit; then, and not till then, the fire bursts forth, and, as the *Psalmist*, we speak with our tongues.

For the *Order* (2.) is the same between the sound and the tongues. The Sound first, the tongues second. We are first to hear before we speak, so the *Spirits* order tells us here. Not turn Teachers at the first dash; not presume to teach others before we are thorowly taught our selves, that's none of the *Spirits* way of teaching, how spiritual soever they think themselves that do so, that speak what they have neither seen nor heard, their own fancies and imaginations, the divisings of their own hearts, such as the Christian world never heard before, whereof there is not so much as the sound, or any thing sounding like it in all the Writings of the Church.

The sound too (3.) before the fire. The *Spirit* manifests it self by degrees, first, more obscurely to the ear, then more evidently to the eye. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear*, says *Job*, Chap. xlii. 5. that was a favour: but now *mine eye seeth thee*, that's a greater. The *Spirit* comes by degrees. Gods favours rise upon us in order. There comes first a great and strong wind that rends the mountains, and breaks in pieces the rocks before him, that throws down our mountainous thoughts and projects, breaks them all in pieces, crosses our designs, thwarts them with some great affliction, or some strange thing or other, breaks our very hearts, our stony hearts; then follows an earthquake in all our faculties, we begin to shake and tremble with the fear of the Almighty; then comes the fire and burns up all the chaff, scorches our very bones, and warms us even at the heart; whereupon presently there issues out a still small voice out of our lips, the tongues follow upon the fire, or are even with it. This was signified to us thus by Gods appearing to *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xix. 11, 12. and the same order the holy *Spirit* of God uses here to the *Apostles*; the same method still he keeps with us. For he thrusts not in upon us unprepared, he makes himself a way into us, gives us not so clear an evidence as seeing him at the first, not till the sound has well awaken'd us, and the wind well brush'd and cleans'd our houses for him. Yet then appear he does.

For we now presently hear of his appearance. *There appeared tongues.* The *manifestation of the Spirit*, says *St. Paul*, *is given to every man to profit withal*, 1 *Cor.* xii. 7. Not the *Spirit* only, but the *manifestation* too. No *Spirit* without some manifestation. If the *Spirit* be an extraordinary *Spirit*, the manifestation will be so too: If it be but ordinary, the manifestation will be no more.

1. If God sends any with an extraordinary commission to preach or teach, he enables them with an extraordinary *Spirit*, appears with them after some extraordinary fashion, tongues, or miracles, or some high heavenly fires come with them. They but blaspheme the *Spirit*, and usurp upon the Office who take it upon them without such a warrant; they *run* without *sending*, says God, *Jer.* xxiii. 21. their tongues are but their own, and (however those perverse fellows in the *Psalms* infer, they are they that ought to speak, who is Lord over them? *Psal.* xii. 4.) they ought not to speak, there is a Lord over them, what ere they think, that will one day call them to accompt, and make them know it; their

fire they bring is but *Nadabs* and *Abihu's*, their zeal without knowledge, they have no tongue but what their mother taught them, the holy *Spirit* has taught them none, made no appearance to them either by fire or by tongues, they are filled with some other Spirit, the Spirit of Pride, of Division, or Rebellion, or somewhat worse; where the *Spirit* sends with an extraordinary commission, it will appear by some gift extraordinary and miraculous, somewhat will appear.

But (2.) if our mission be but ordinary, the ordinary way that the *Spirit* has now left in the power and authority of the Church will be sufficient; yet that must appear too, our authority appear thence; our tongues serve to it too, to the edifying of the Church, 1 Cor. xiv. 12. to the building of it up, not to the pulling of it down. Every gift of the holy *Spirit* is to have its manifestation, tongues, and interpretation, and prayer, and Prophecy, and all the rest, yet all in order. Every one to employ, not hide his talent; he who has a *ministry to wait on that*, he that is to *exhort to attend to that*, he that is to *teach to busie himself in that*, though all according to proportion, Rom. xii. 6, 7, 8. all to appear to the glory of God.

Yea, even those saving graces of the *Spirit* are not always to be kept within, they are to appear in tongues or fire, so shine that others may glorifie, so speak and act that others seeing our good conversation may be affected with it, and perswaded to grace and vertue by it. The *Spirit* is not given to be hid under a bushel; the wind cannot, the fire will not, the tongue is not usual to be kept in so. They all appear'd here after their way, the wind after its way, the tongues and fire after theirs; in this verse to the sight, the most certain of the senses that we might not be deceived by pretended Spirits, might have somewhat manifest to judge by, to tell us that the graces of the Spirit, whether those for edification of others, or sanctification of our selves, are for manifestation, to appear to others as well as to our selves, we receive them to that purpose, to profit others, and to approve our selves.

These may serve for reasons why the *Spirit* appears, but why the *Spirit* appears now, now first, and not before; now first visibly to the world, is worth enquiry. And 'tis to shew the preheminance of the Gospel above the Law: That stood only in *meats* and *drinks*, and divers *washings* and *carnal ordinances*, says the *Apostle*, Heb. ix. 10. was but the Law of a carnal Commandment, Heb. vii. 16. The Gospel is a Law of Spirit and life; the Law of *Moses* a dead a killing Letter, but the Gospel of Christ a quickning Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 6. the Law a course of shadows, the Gospel only the true light. It will appear so by the next Particular we are to handle, the manner of his appearing. In tongues, in cloven tongues, in tongues as it were of fire: I shall invert the order, for the fire it is that gives light unto the tongues to make them for to appear; of the fire then first, to shew them the better.

For the *Spirit* to appear as wind or breath is nothing strange. It carries them in its name. *Spiritus à spirando* every one can tell you. But that this breath should not only blow up a fire, but be it self also blown into it, the Spirit here appear as fire, that's somewhat hard at first perhaps to understand: Yet you shall see many good reasons for it. Four great ones I shall give you, which comprehend more under them: (1.) To shew the *Analogy* and correspondence of Gods dealings and dispensations, how they agree both with themselves, and with one another. (2.) To insinuate to us the nature and condition of the holy *Spirit*. (3.) To
signifie

signifie the several gifts and graces of it. (4.) To declare its operations also and effects.

1. The *Holy Ghost* here appear'd like fire, that we might see it is the same God that gave both Law and Gospel, the same *Spirit* in both *Testaments*. The Law was promulgated by fire, *Exod. xix. 18.* the Lord descended on Mount *Sinai* then in fire. The Gospel also here is first divulged by tongues as it were of fire in *Mount Sion*. The difference only is that there were here no lightnings, thunders, clouds, or smoke, as there were there; nothing terrible, nothing dark or gloomy here, all light, and peace, and glory.

2. Under the Old *Testament*, the Prophets oft were Commissionated by fire to their Offices; the Angel takes a live coal from off the Altar and lays it upon *Isaiah's* mouth, *Isa. vi. 7.* *Elijah* the Prophet stood up as fire, *Eccles. xlviii. 1.* *Ezekiel's* first Vision was of appearances of fire, *Ezek. i. 4, 13.* The Commissions therefore of the *Apostles* were drawn here also, as it were, with pens of fire, that they might the more lively answer, and the better express the *Spirit* of the *Prophets*.

3. That the nature of the Law they were to preach might be express'd too. It was the Law of love, and the holy fire of Charity was it they were sent to kindle in the World.

4. It was to teach them what they were to expect in the World themselves, fire and faggot, affliction, and tribulation, the lot and portion both of them, and of their followers ever since.

5. It was to teach them what they were to be, *burning* and *shining lights* to lead others into heaven.

Lastly, That so all righteousness, Law and Prophets, might be fulfilled, the types of the one, and the promises of the other, from the first of them to the last, to *St. John Baptists*, that they should be baptized with the *Holy Ghost* and *with fire*, that the fire that Christ came to send into the earth, and was then already kindled, might now burn out into the World. And all this to shew the Almighty Wisdom, who thus agreeably orders all his doings from the first unto the last, that we might with the greater confidence embrace the Doctrine of the Gospel which so evenly consented with the Law, and was added only to bring it to perfection, to raise up the fire of devotion and charity to the height.

2. But not only to manifest the wisdom of the Father, and perform the promise of the Son, but secondly to intimate the nature of the holy *Spirit*.

Fire is the purest Element. The holy *Spirit* is pure, and incorruptible, *thine incorruptible Spirit*, says the *wise man*, *Wisd. xii. 1.* No evil can dwell with it. It will not mingle with humane interests; By this you may know it from all *other Spirits*. They intermix with private humours, and self-respects, and great ones fancies: The holy *Spirit* is a fire, and will not mix, it must dwell alone; has not a tongue now for this, and then for that, to please men, and ease it self, but is always pure and incorrupt.

Fire (2.) is the subtlest Element, it pierces into every part; And *whither can I go then from thy Spirit*, says holy *David*, *Psal. cxxxix. 6.* *If I climb up into heaven, thou art there; If I go down to hell thou art there also. If I take the wings of the morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the Sea, even there also will it find me out.* Darkness cannot cover me, thick darkness cannot hide me, night it self cannot conceal me from thee, O thou divine

Spirit. O keep me therefore that I may do nothing that may make me ashamed and hide my self, seeing thy eyes will quickly pierce into me.

3. Fire is an active nature, always stirring, always moving. Nothing can be found better to express the nature of the holy *Spirit*. It mov'd from the beginning, actuated the first matter into all the shapes we see, breath'd an active principle into them all; renew'd again the face of the Earth when the waters had defaced it; blows, and the waters flow; blows again, and dries them up; guides the *Patriarchs*, inspires the *Prophets*, rests upon the Governours of the People, from *Moses* to the seventy *Elders*; gives spirit and courage to the *Martyrs*; *Non permanebit spiritus meus in vagina*, says God, *Gen. vi.* My *Spirit* will not endure to be always as in a rusty sheath; it will be lightning the understanding, it will be warming the affections, it will be stirring of the passions, it will be working in the heart, it will be acting in the hand, it will be moving in the feet, it will be quickning all the powers to the service of the Almighty; nothing so busie as this holy fire, nothing so active as this *Spirit*. Though the nature and essence of it cannot be full express'd, it is thus very powerfully resembled.

3. The gifts of it more easily by this fire. Seven there are numbred of them out of *Isa. xi. 2.* The *Spirit* of wisdom and understanding, the *Spirit* of counsel and ghostly strength, the *Spirit* of knowledge and true godliness, and the *Spirit* of holy fear, all very naturally represented to us by so many properties I shall observe to you of the fire. Fire, it ascends, it penetrates, it tries, it hardens, it enlightens, it warms, it melts. You have all these again in the seven gifts of the *Spirit*. For (1.) the holy *Spirit* elevates our souls by the Spirit of Wisdom, *cælestia sapere*, as it is *Col. iii. 2.* to those things that are above. *Sapientia est rerum altissimarum*, says the divine *Philosopher*, Wisdom is of things of the highest nature, of a high ascending strain. (2.) It penetrates and pierces like the fire by the Spirit of understanding, understands that which the Spirit of man cannot understand, *1 Cor. ii. 11.* the very things of God, pierces into them all. (3.) It tries like fire, by the Spirit of counsel, and advice, teaches us to prove all things, and choose the best. (4.) It hardens us against all the evils that can befall us, as fire does the brick against all weather by the spirit of fortitude and ghostly strength. (5.) It enlightens the darkness of our souls by the spirit of knowledge, teaches us to know the things that belong unto our peace, the ways and methods of salvation. (6.) It heats the coldness of our affections by the Spirit of piety and true godliness, inflames us with devotion and zeal to Gods service. And (7.) it softens our obdurate hearts by the Spirit of holy fear that we melt into tears and sighs at the apprehension of Gods displeasure, even as Wax melteth before the fire: the highest, hardest, rockiest mountains melt and flow down at his presence, when once his Spirit does but cast a ray upon them. These are the seven gifts of the Spirit, represented to us by so many properties of the fire.

4. There are seven other operations and effects of the same *Spirit*, as lively also express'd by it, and make the fourth reason why the holy Ghost appears under the semblance of fire.

1. Fire it burns; and the Prophet *Isaiah* calls this Spirit a *Spirit* of burning, *Isa. iv. 4* It makes our hearts burn within us, as it did the *Disciples* going to *Emaus*, *St. Luke xxiv. 32.* puts us to a kind of pain, raises sorrow and contrition in us, makes the scalding water gush out of our eyes, you may even feel it burn you.

2. With

2. With this burning it purifies and purges too ; As things are purified by the fire, so are our spirits and souls, and bodies purified by the Spirit.

3. For purifie it must needs, for it devours all the dross, the chaff, the *hay* and *stubble* that is in us ; purges out our sins, burns up every thing before it that offends, is a *consuming fire*, Heb. xii. 29. so is God, so is his Spirit.

4. Yet, as it is a consuming, so it is a renewing fire. Fire makes things new again. And do but send out thy Spirit, O Lord, and they are made, *Psal.* civ. 30. We are all made, for so it is that thou renewest the face of the earth, the face of this dull earth of ours, by putting into it the Holy Spirit.

5. To this purpose it makes, that like as fire it separates (5.) things of divers natures, silver from tin, metals from dross. *Separare heterogenea* is one of the effects of fire, says the *Philosopher*, to distinguish and divide between things of different kinds. And *Spiritus judicii & discretionis*, the *Prophet* styles the Spirit, a Spirit of judgment it is, *Isai.* 4. 4. a discerning Spirit, teaches us to discern between Dross and Gold, Truth and Error, between Good and Evil, and without it we discern nothing. This the *Apostle* reckons as a peculiar donation of it, the *discerning of spirits*, 1 Cor. xii. 10.

6. Yet as it separates things of different natures, so (6.) it unites things of the same kind, just as the fire does several pieces of the same metal into one body. This holy Spirit is a Spirit of unity. They that separate, they have not the *Spirit*, St. *Jude* 19. Schisms and Divisions, Strife, Heresies and Seditions are the works of the flesh, not of the spirit, *Gal.* v. 20. The fruit of the *Spirit* is *love* and *peace*, says St. *Paul* there, *ver.* 22. And the *unity* of the *Spirit* in the *bond* of *peace* we hear of too, *Ephes.* iv. 3. Into one *Spirit* we are baptiz'd all, for there is but one ; one *Spirit*, one *Body*, one *Hope*, one *Lord*, one *Faith*, one *Baptism*, one *God*, one *all* that are of God, *ver.* 5, 6. nothing so contrary to the Holy Spirit, as divisions of the members from the head, or from one another ; a shrewd witness this against the spirits of our age, and an evidence that to what spirit soever they lay claim, they lay false claim to this, they belong not to this Spirit, which is so much for uniting all the parts of the body of Christ together,

7. And this it can do when its fees its time, for lastly, it is an invincible Spirit, it bears down all before it, turns all into it, like the fire, of all the Elements the most victorious and triumphant. There is no standing out against this Spirit, 'tis an Almighty Spirit that can do what it will. It inflames the air into a fire, vain airy spirits into celestial flames of love and charity. It dries up the water, the raw waterish humors of our souls, and fixes all waverings and inconstancies. It burns up our earth, and all the grass and hay, and sprouts what ever that stand against it. It sets whole houses all a fire, sets us all a fire for Heaven and heavenly business. Thus it burns, it purifies, it consumes and renews again, it separates and it gathers, and it carries all before it, does what it will in Heaven and Earth, subdues Scepters, vanquishes Kingdoms, converts Nations, throws down Infernal Powers. and turns all into the obedience of Christ. To this purpose it is, that it now also here comes in *Tongues*. The second manner we noted of his appearance ; and that for three reasons, (1.) nothing more convenient to express either our business, or him whose it is.

The Tongue is the instrument of speech, the Word is express by it ;
Christ

Christ is the Word, the Holy *spirit*, as it were, the Tongue to express him, comes to day with an Host of tongues to send this Word abroad into all the World.

Nothing more necessary, for the Apostles were to be the Preachers of it, had receiv'd a Commission to go and preach, *St. Matth. xvi. 15.* wanted yet their tongues, some new enablements, went not therefore till they were this day brought them; and a more necessary thing the *Holy Ghost* could not bring them for that purpose.

Yet they had need (2.) be of fire, sharp piercing tongues, like the little flames of fire, such as would pierce into the soul, reveal the inmost secrets of the heart and spirits, and, it seems, so they proved, *1 Cor. xiv. 25. piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, of the joints and marrow, Heb. iv. 12.*

Tongues of fire (3.) to warm the cold affections of men into a love of Christ; every tongue is not able to do that, it must be a tongue set on fire from Heaven that can do that. Tongues, and tongues of fire, sharp piercing tongues, warm with heavenly heat are the only tongues for the business of Christ.

3. Yet *cloven* they must be too. 'Tis not a single tongue will do it. The *Apostles* were to preach to the world, and in the world there were a world of tongues; that they might therefore so preach as to be understood; as many tongues were necessary to be given them, as there were people with whom they were to deal.

Behold the greatness of Gods goodness here. Tongues were divided for a curse at first; lo, he turns them into a blessing; then they were sent to divide the world, now they are given to unite it; then they wrought confusion, now they are given to unite it. Thus God can turn our curses into blessings when he pleases. And fit it is, that we then should turn our tongues to his praise and glory.

This we may do with one tongue alone. But they who would be Preachers, and teach others, had need of more. Tongues though they come not now suddenly like the wind, yet come they must as they can come, by our industry and Gods blessing. God would not have sent so many tongues, if more then one had not been necessary for his work; though not now perhaps to preach, yet to understand surely what we preach. 'Tis a bold adventure to presume to the office of a Teacher with a single tongue. He is not able to teach children to spell true that knows no more, much less to spell the mysteries of the Gospel to men, who understands not so much as that one tongue he speaks if he understand no more. Unless we be wiser than Christ and his Holy Spirit, we cannot think any sufficiently endued to preach them, but such as have received the gift of tongues, more then one or two; the gift I say, for though to speak with tongues be not given now miraculously, as it was here, yet given it is to us, it is the gift still of the *Holy Spirit* as a blessing upon our labours.

But there are other tongues besides which come from this days mercy. The tongue that speaks right things, the tongue that comforts the afflicted soul, the tongue that recalls the wandring step, the tongue that defends the fatherless and widow, the tongue that pours it self out in prayers and praises, the tongue that speaks continually of holy things, the tongue that speaks no evil, nor does no hurt, the tongue that speaks nothing but a meek and humble and obedient spirit; these are the tongues of the *Holy Spirit*, and even from this day they have their rise,
these

these are for all orders and sorts of men, and if those men who now take to themselves to be Teachers, had but learnt to speak with these tongues, they would have spoke to far better purpose, and more to Gods acceptance than now they do in speaking as they do, they had not thus blasphemed the Holy *Spirit* to entitle him to the extravagancy of their tongues.

Yet fire and tongues, and tongues of fire, are not all the wonders that this day produced. These fell not only like a flash of Lightning upon the Apostles, but they sate upon them, or rather, *It sate upon them* says the Text.

All these tongues, as divided and cloven as they were, like so many flames or tongues of fire at top, they were all united in one root below, with *one mouth*, Rom. xv. 6. with *one voice*, Chap. iv. 24. they spake all but the same thing. They are not the tongues of the *Spirit*, that speak now one thing, now another, that agree not in the foundation at the least.

Nor is that fire of the Holy Ghosts enkindling, that cannot sit, for to the fire we may (2.) refer this *It*. The holy flame is not like the fire of thorns, that are always crackling & making a noise, it can sit quietly in the heart and on the lips, and on the head, sometimes in the one, and sometimes on the other; it sits upon the heads and singes not a hair, it sits in the heart and scalds it not at all, it sits upon the lips, yet makes them not burst out into a heat; the fiery zeal that is so much cried up for spirit in the world is too unquiet, too hot, too raging to be of this days fire.

Yet (3.) we may refer this *It* to the Holy *Spirit* it self. That sate upon each of them too.

It sate first upon each of them as a crown of glory, so St. Cyril. The *Apostles* were the Crowns and Glory of the Churches, and so this install'd them.

It sate (2.) upon them as in a Chair of State, to fix authority upon them, to set them in their Chairs, to give them power to govern and guide the Church.

It sate (3.) upon them so, to call into their mind the promise of their Master, that he would send one to sit in counsel with them, and be with them always to the end of the world, for sitting is a posture to denote constancy, establishment, and continuance.

It sate (4.) as it were, to teach us to be settled and constant too, to be established and grounded in our faith, not to be wavering and carried about with every wind of doctrine. There is no greater evidence against error, then that it is not constant to it self, no greater argument against these great pretended spirits, then that they cannot sit, know not where to fix, are always moving, as if the *Psalmist's* curse had taken hold upon them (as it does, and will do without doubt, upon all that take the houses of God in possession, *Psal.* lxxxiii. 12. that usurp upon the office or portion of the Church) as if God had made them like a wheel and as stubble before the wind, that can sit no where, rest at nothing, but turn about from one uncertainty to another. The Holy *Spirit* is a Spirit that will sit still, and be at peace, continue and abide.

It sate (5.) upon each, to teach each of us peace and quiet in all our passions, constancy and continuance in truth and goodness, and a settled and composed behaviour in all conditions, blow the winds never so high, burn the fires of persecution never so hot against us.

It were well now if we could say, as it follows next, concerning the *Apostles*, that we were filled with this Spirit, that we were filled with the Holy

Holy Ghost, that we might arrive at that point within our selves, though we cannot now arrive at that particular in the Text.

The only filling now that I have time to tell you of, is that before us, and 'tis a good one, the filling us with the body and bloud of Christ, which is a signal filling us with the *Spirit*. Go we will then about it, so to fill our souls. The tongues and fire in the Text, we may well apply to it, we may have use of there.

For tongues are not to speak with only, but tast with two: O tast we then how good and gracious the Lord is there, that vouchsafes so graciously to come under our roofs, to come upon tongues. And

Tongues (2.) are to help to digest as well as tast, there in the mouth is a kind of first digestion made. Ruminatè we then, and meditate upon Christ when we have tasted him. Let it be our business to spend much of our time and days henceforth in meditation of him, that's the way indeed to be filled with his *Spirit*, while we thus digest him and chew upon him in our spirits.

Nor is (3.) fire improper any way to bring to that holy Table. The fire of charity is to kindle our devotion there, to warm our affections and desires to it.

There (4.) our tongues are to be warm'd into praises, that they may run a nimble descant upon his benefits, and move apace to the glory of his Name. Thus are our tongues to be employed, and thus is the fire to be kindled in us that we may speak with our tongues. This is the way to be filled with the Holy *Spirit*, this blessed *Sacrament* the means to it.

Come thou therefore O blessed *Spirit* into our hearts and tongues, lighten our understanding with thy heavenly light, warm our affections with thy holy fire, purge away all our dross, burn up all our chaff, renew our spirits, separate our sins and evils from us; unite us in thy love, subdue us to thy self, teach our hearts to think, our tongues to speak, our hands to act, our feet to move only to thy will; settle thy self in us hence forward, and dwell with us; so teach us with all our tongues and powers to praise thee here-upon earth, that we may one day praise thee with them in Heaven for evermore.

A
S E R M O N
U P O N
Trinity Sunday.

R E V. IV. 8.

—And they rest not day and night, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy,*
Lord, God, Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.



Need not stretch the *Text* to reach the *Time*. The *Text* *Holy, Holy, Holy* in it, is plain enough to teach the *Trinity*. An *Anthem* sung here by the *Angels* and *Saints* in heaven; done so here also by four of the chief *Apostles*, and the *Bishops* of *Judea*, signified by the *four beasts* and *twenty four Elders*; taken up after generally by the *Saints on earth*, commended to us by the *Church* to day as our *Epistle* sent from heaven with a pattern in it for our Hymns and Praises to the blessed *Trinity, Lord God Almighty*.

For 'tis a part, I must tell you, of one of *St. John's* Visions, presenting to us what is done in heaven, what God would have done on earth, and what should there be done ere long throughout it, beginning at *Hierusalem*. Glory, and honour, and thanks should be given unto God for the wonders he was doing for his servants, for the deliverance he was working for his *Church*, for the judgments he was bringing on their enemies; as glory had been of old given him by his *Saints* and *Prophets*, was now given him by his *Apostles* and *Bishops*, so it should be given still by the whole *Christian Church* for ever; as he himself *was, and is, and is to come*: so was his praise, and is, and is to come; we therefore all to learn to bear our parts in that heavenly *Anthem* against the time we come thither to bear them company. Example you see we have here set before us to do it by, and a form to do it in; better we cannot wish: the *four Beasts* or *Cherubims, Angels, Saints*, and the *Apostles*, there's our Pattern; for *they rest not day and night saying it*: and *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, which was, and is, and is to come*, there's the form we best do it in.

In each Part we shall observe a kind of *Trinity*, or three Parts in each.

In the Pattern, (1.) the Persons ; (2.) their earnestness, and (3.) their continuance. (1.) The persons praising God, and saying it, *They*, the *four beasts* or living creatures, as the words tell us just before. (2.) Their earnestness in it, *They rest not saying*, they cannot rest for saying it ; cannot rest without the saying it, unless they say it, say it over and over, *Holy, Holy, Holy* ; cannot rest but doing it, that's their rest they take, their praising God. (3.) Their continuance at it, *day and night* it is, and without rest and pause in it, they are continually doing it, saying and doing all to his honour and glory.

In the Form of Praise we have a sort of *Trinity* too, three things observable: (1.) The glory or honour given, *Holy, Holy, Holy*. (2.) The Persons to whom it is, *Lord, God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, yet all three in one ; one single *Lord*, one only *God*, one alone *Almighty*, and no more ; so there's the *Unity in Trinity* into the bargain. And (3.) here are the benefits intimated we praise him for, *He was our Creator*, *He is our Redeemer*, *He will be our Glorifier*. So you see *Trinities* enough in the *Text* to make it *Trinity Sunday* in it, to fill all the *Trinity Sundays* after it.

The sum is, that we are all to bear our parts in this holy *Doxology*, to give *glory, and honour, and power* to the blessed *Trinity*, with the *four beasts*, and *four and twenty Elders* from time to time for evermore ; and *that* which may here serve well to persuade us to it is the *Company*, and with them we will begin. And *they, &c.*

But who are *they* ? The beginning of the *verse* tells us the *four beasts*, or, as it may more genuinely and handsomely be translated, the *four living creatures*, *τίωτες ζῶα*, but what, or who are they ? That's the question, and a hard one, too, it seems by the variety of opinions, probably to be answered rather by conjecture than resolution. We shall take the likeliest of them, and pass the rest.

1. Some by the *four living Creatures*, this *they*, would have the *four Cardinal virtues* understood, by the *Lion* fortitude, by the *Calf* or *Oxe* justice, by the *Eagle* temperance, and by the *Man* prudence. And then the sense will be that God is most signally prais'd and glorified by a virtuous life, no way like that to praise him. To do righteousness, to walk wisely, to live soberly, to stand stoutly to God and goodness, that's the true way to give glory to the whole *Trinity*.

2. Others by the *four living Creatures* apprehend the four chief faculties of our souls to be insinuated, *with* which we are to praise him. The irascible intimated by the *Lion*, the concupiscible by the *Oxe*, the rational by the *face of man*, and the Spirit by the *Eagle*. And here the Lesson is, that we are to do it, to praise God with all our powers, set our affections and desires upon it, be moved and angry at every thing that comes in to hinder it, search all the means our reason can find out to perfect praise, and raise up our Spirits upon Eagles wings to perform it to the highest pitch.

3. Some by these *four* conceive the whole world, consisting of the four Elements, represented to us as praising God. The fire by the *Lion*, whose nature is hot and fiery ; the earth by the *Ox* that tills it ; the air by *man* that breaths it ; the water by the *Eagle*, which as other fowl was made out of it, *Gen. i. 20*. All these indeed we find called in by the holy *Psalmist* to make up the song of praise, *Psal. cxlviii*. and by the *three Children* in the fiery furnace to make up theirs, that we may know the Fire and all the Elements, Beasts and all Creatures praise him as well as man ; nay, better,

better, are readier commonly to do it than he; that he is fain, even the devoutest *he* of all of us to cry out to them to come in with their notes to help him out, and fill up the Choir.

4. Some think Gods title of slow to anger, and swift to mercy, is by these four here exprest by way of *Hieroglyphick*: by the *Oxe* slowness, by the *Lion* anger, by the *Eagle* swiftness, and by the *Man* mercy represented to us. And without doubt or question in this slowness to wrath, and swiftness to have mercy is Gods greatest glory, and for them we most willingly give him glory, must not cease at any time to give him glory.

5. Others suppose it an *Hieroglyphick* of *Christ* himself, who in his *Incarnation* appear'd in the form or face of a *man*; in his *Passion* like a *Calf* or *Oxe* for sacrifice; in his *Resurrection* like a *Lion*, the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*; in his *Ascension* like an *Eagle*; and if this pass, the meaning is, that by *Christ* Gods glory is most advanced, by his *Incarnation*, *Passion*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*, heaven and earth is filled with his glory, and for this above all the rest, for him and his benefits we are to give God the greatest glory; there, as it were, begins all our praise, thence the *twenty four Elders* first throw down their Crowns, and fall down and worship, as it were acknowledging him the beginning of all the good we receive both of grace and glory, *Christ* the Author and Original of them all.

But (6.) to come a little near. These *four living Creatures*, say others, represent the *four Evangelists*, that preach *Christs* Life and Death, *Resurrection* and *Ascension* into glory. The *Lion* St. *Mark*, for he begins his *Gospel*, as it were, with the voice of a *Lion* roaring in the Wilderness. The *Calf* or *Oxe* St. *Luke*, who begins *his* with the story of a *Levitical Priest*, whose Ministry was about the Sacrifice of Calves and Oxen. The *Man* St. *Matthew*, who takes his rise from the Genealogy of men. The *Eagle* St. *John*, who at the very first soars up on high, that we had need of Eagles wings and eyes to follow and discern him. By these four indeed Gods grace and mercy, *Christs* name and glory is spread over the face of all the earth, and by this we learn, that to preach, and teach, and publish the things of *Christ*, is to give God praise and glory, a singular and notable way to do so.

7. Some that suppose they yet hit it nearer, conceive God here brought in in the Vision sitting as the *Bishop* of *Jerusalem*, with all the *Bishops* of *Judea* in council all about him, as *Acts* xv. it seems they did; and these *four living Creatures* about the Throne to be those four chief *Apostles*, St. *Peter*, St. *John*, St. *Barnabas*, and St. *Paul* there present, rank'd here higher than the rest. St. *Peter* for his primacy set first, and resembled by the *Lion* for his fiery zeal and fervour. St. *Paul* deciphered by the *Oxe*, in respect of his labours more abundantly than they all. St. *Barnabas* intimated by the *Man*, as being a Son of consolation, humanity, and mercy by the interpretation of his name. St. *John* pointed at by the *Eagle* for those sublime and high speculations of the Divinity of *Christ* above all the rest. These were the four great Standard-bearers of the *Christian Israel*, (for these *four living Creatures* were born in the standard of old *Israel*, and here alluded to) these the four great Champions, and Defenders, the Planters and Propagators of the *Christian Faith*, of the blessed *Trinity*, of the glory of God and *Christ* throughout the world. And thus we see to undertake the business of the *Gospel*, to take pains and labour to defend and propagate it with all our might and main is an actual and real glorifying of God and *Christ*.

Yet, lastly, whatever these may be imagined to represent to us, or whomsoever to point out, or what council, or persons, or judicature soever to resemble, *Angels* to be sure they were that thus represented the Vision to St. *John*, and as such if we consider them, we may conclude all the business with this Lesson, that the business of heaven as well as earth, of *Angels* as well as men, is to be employed in Praises and thanksgivings to the *Almighty*; an employment therefore well worth our time, and pains, and study.

Now put all these together, and I cannot give you a fuller description of the way to praise and glorify him than these have given you. For to do it as we should, is (1.) to live virtuously; (2.) To employ all the powers and faculties of soul and body to his service; (3.) To call in all the Creatures to help us to do it, and to use them to it; (4.) To reflect often upon both his mercies and his judgments, and acknowledge his goodness in them both; (5.) To meditate upon the Life, the Death, the Resurrection, the Ascension of *Christ* with all devotion and humility; (6.) To preach and publish it what we can; (7.) To defend and maintain it to our utmost power; (8.) To reckon it, lastly, an *Angels* work, a heavenly piece of business thus to spend our days and years in giving glory to the most highest.

And if heaven, and earth, and all the creatures else besides sinful man become thus the Trumpets of their Creators glory, and in all their several ways and orders ambitiously contrive themselves into the instruments of it, what strange creatures must we needs be that either neglect it, or forget it? *Heaven and earth*, says our morning Hymn, are full of the Majesty of thy glory, we can be no other than hell, then, that are empty of it, that do not resound it. *Dragons and all deeps*, says the Psalmist, Psal. cxlviii. 7. all but the old Dragon, and the bottomless deep, the deep of hell, all praise him else. You see what we bring our selves to by our unthankfulness, what a sad condition they are in who give not glory unto God, who delight not in magnifying and praising him, who are against the Hymns and Anthems to that purpose. Thus you see it done in the Text, by *Saints and Angels* in the Heavens, by *Apostles and Evangelists* on the Earth. Thus *de facto*, so it was then. But 'tis as well a Prediction of what should be after: that not only the present Age of the *Apostles* and holy *Bishops* then, but the succeeding Ages also of the Church should acknowledge the glory of the undivided *Trinity*. And it fell out accordingly. Not only that meek and merciful man St. *Gregory*, that valiant Lion St. *Ambrose*, that laborious Oxe St. *Jerome*, that sublime Eagle St. *Augustine* (as some please to fancy these four beasts) or the four first Patriarchates as others have interpreted them, but all the four corners of the earth have since professed it, and, with the twenty four Elders, fallen down and worshipped it; The lustre and glory of that glorious mystery has shone thorow all the quarters of the World, and all his famous mercies to his people, and his judgments against their enemies are still daily celebrated and magnified in all the Congregations of the *Saints*. This St. *John* foresaw, and here foretels the poor persecuted *Christians* then, that how hard soever things went with them then, they should ere long turn all their sighs and lamentations into Songs of praise for their deliverance and salvation.

This they should, and (3.) we should as much: It was foretold of them they should, it is commanded us we should. Therefore glorify him, says the *Apostle*, 1 Cor. vi. 20. glorify him in your bodies, and glorify him in your spirits, glorify him with the bodies that glorify him, and glorify him with the
Spirits

Spirits that glorifie him, bear them all company in so doing; do it all the ways you can, you can neither do it too many, nor too much. Put on the faces of *Eagles* in the *Temple*, and raise your souls up there and praise him. Put on the faces of *men* at home, and let the holiness of your conversation praise him there. Put on the appearance of *Oxen* in your Callings, and let the diligence of your Actions and Vocations praise him. Put on the appearance of *Lions* abroad in all places of temptations, and let your courage in the resisting and repelling them praise him there. Thus we truly copy out our pattern.

Yet to transcribe it perfectly well, we must now secondly also transcribe their earnestness: For here they not only give praise and glory unto God, but they do it earnestly, they rest not doing it, they rest not saying: that is,

1. They cannot rest unless they say it. And, *I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, nor mine eye-lids to slumber, neither the temples of my head to take any rest till I have found out a way to praise my God, till I have offered up the service of my thanks, and added something to his glory, must be the Christians resolution.*

2. *They rest not saying*, is, they say it, and say it again, say it over and over, *Holy, Holy, Holy*. ^{Asio} is in some Copies nine times read; *Holy* nine times repeated; they think they can never say it enough: No more it seems did *David*, when he so oft repeated, *For his mercy endureth for ever* in one single Psalm, *Psal. cxxxvi*. And hence it is the Church, to imitate this holy fervour, so often reiterates the *Doxologie*, and inserts so many several *Hymns*, and even either begins almost all its Prayers and Collects with an acknowledgment either of his Mercy, Goodness, and Providence, or ends them with acknowledgment of his Majesty, Power, and Glory; *this* both to imitate the glorious *Saints*, and to obey the *Apostles* injunction of being *servent in Prayers and Praises*.

3. *They rest not saying*, is, they rest not but in so doing. That's their rest, their joy, their happiness to do so, thus to be always praising God. It would be ours too, had we the same affections to it, or the same senses of it. We could not go to rest, nor lie down to sleep, could not sit down and take our rest till we had first lift up our eyes and hearts, nay, and voices, too, sometimes, till we had first paid our thanks, and given him praise for his protections in our ways and labours untill then.

3. But to be thus eager and earnest at it is not all. So we might be for a start and give over presently; but 'tis *day and night* that *Angels* and good *men* do it. There is no night indeed properly with the *Angels*; 'Tis with them eternal day: yet all that time which we call day and night they are still a saying it. The Morning comes and they are at it: the Night comes and they are at it still. *Let me go for the day breaketh*, says the *Angel* that strove with *Jacob*, *Gen. xxxii. 26*. And I must sing my Mattens, adds the *Chaldee Paraphrase*; as if he had said, I can stay no longer, I must go take my Morning course in the heavenly Choirs. And in the depth of night we find them by whole hosts and multitudes at their *Gloria in Excelsis, Glory be to God in the highest*, *St. Luke ii. 13*.

The first fervours of Christian Piety were somewhat like this of the *Angels*. You might have seen their *Churches* full at midnight, all the Watches of the night you might have heard them chanting out the praises of their God, and all the several hours of the day you might have found some or other continually praising God in his holy *Temples*, as well as in their Closets. Nay, in the *Jewish Temple* they ceased not to do so.

Ye that by night stand in the House of the Lord, Psal. cxiv. 2. Praise him ye, says holy David; for indeed ye stand there to praise him; and the Temple it self stood open all the day for all comers, to that purpose, when they would. Therefore shall every good man sing of thy praise without ceasing, says the Psalmist, Psal. xxx. 13. 'Tis a good thing to do so, Psal. xcii. 1, 2. To tell of thy loving kindness early in the morning, and of thy Truth in the night season; so good, that David himself resolves upon it, Psal. cxlv. 2. Every day will I give thanks unto thee, and praise thy Name for ever and ever, prays also that his mouth may be filled with Gods praise, that he may sing of his glory and honour all the day long, Psal. lxxi. 7. from morning to night, and from night again to morning, he would willingly do nothing else.

Nay, be the night and day taken either in their natural or moral sense, either properly for the spaces and intervals of light and darkness, or morally for the sad hours of affliction and adversity, and those bright ones of jollity and prosperity; good men praise God in them both, do not cease to do it; if sorrows curtain up their eyes with tears, and put out all their light of joy and comfort, yet *blessed be the Name of the Lord*, cry they out with patient *Job*, Chap. i. 21. Again, if their paths be strow'd with light, and the Sun gild all their actions with lustrous beams; if Heaven shine full upon them, they are not yet so dazell'd but they see and adore Gods mercy in them, and in the mid'st of all their glories and successes they are still upon his praise, and render all to him. Neither the one night, nor this other day make them at any time forget him. A good *item* to us hence, (1.) not to suffer our pleasures and vagaries, our mirths and vanities, our successes and prosperities to steal away the time we are to spend in giving God thanks and glory for them. Nor (2.) to permit our selves so much time to the reflection upon our griefs and troubles, as to omit the praising God, that they are no worse, and that he thus fatherly chastises us to our bettering and amendment, does all to us for the best. Yet not to cease praising him *day and night*, seems still to have some difficulty to understand it. The *Angels* perhaps, that neither eat nor drink, nor sleep, nor labour, they may do it; but how shall poor man compass it?

Why! first, Imprint in thy soul a fixt and solid resolution to direct all thy words and actions to his glory. Renew it (2.) every day thou risest, and every night thou liest down. Renounce (3) all by-ends and purposes that shall at any time creep in upon thee to take the praise and honour to thy self. Design (4.) thy actions, as often as thou canst, particularly to Gods service, with some short offering them up to Gods will and pleasure, either to cross or prosper them, and when they be done, say, *Gods Name be praised* for them. And lastly, omit not the times of Prayer and Praise either in publick or in private, but use thy best diligence to observe them, to be constant and attentive at them. Thus with the Spouse in the *Canticles*, when we sleep our hearts awake; and whether we eat or drink, or walk, or talk, or whatsoever we do, we *do all to the glory of God*, and may be said to praise him *day and night*, and not cease, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* And so I come to the second General. The form here set us to praise him in. In which first we have to consider the glory it self that is expressly given him; *Holy, Holy, Holy.*

To speak right indeed, the whole sentence is nothing else; yet this evidently referring to that of *Isai. vi. 3.* where the *Seraphims* use this first
part

part in their *Hymn* of praise, I conceive this the chief and most remarkable part of it, which may therefore bear the name before the rest.

Now this *saying*, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, is attributing all purity, perfection and glory to God as to the subject of it himself, and the original of it to others, thereby acknowledging him only to be worship'd and ador'd. So that saying thus, we say all good of *him*, and all good from him to our selves.

Thrice 'tis repeated, which, according to the *Hebrew custom*, is so done to imprint it the deeper in our thoughts, and may serve us as a threefold cord, which is not easily broken, to draw us to it.

But another reason the *Fathers* give. And it is, (1.) they say, to teach us the knowledge of the holy and blessed *Trinity*. Indeed, why else thrice and no less or more? Why follows, *Lord, God, Almighty*; three more words? why *ὁ υἱ, ὁ υἱ, ὁ υἱ*, three yet again, and yet but three, *who was, who is, who is to come*? Why do the *Scraphims* in *Isaiah* say no more? yet say so too? Why have we in the following verses, *Glory and Honour and Thanks*, ver. 9. and *Glory, and Honour, and Power*, so punctually thrice, and thrice only offered to them? How came it to be so universally celebrated throughout the World, and put into all the *Catholik Liturgies* every where? words fall not from *Angels* and *Angelical Spirits* by chance or casually, The holy Penmen write not words hap hazard. Nor is it easie to conceive so hard a doctrine, so uneasie to reason, should be so generally and humbly entertain'd, but by some powerful working of Gods Spirit. This may be enough to satisfie us, that the blessed *Trinity* is more then obscurely pointed out to us here.

And (2.) to be sure, the Fountain of all Holiness is here pointed to us, that we may learn to whom to go for grace; that we may see we our selves are but unholy things; that nothing is in it self pure or holy, none but God.

And (3.) it points us out what we should be; *Be ye holy as I am holy*, says God. No way otherwise to come near him; no way else to come so near him, as to give him thanks; for out of polluted lips he will not take them. For in the second place the *Lord God Almighty* it is we are to give this glory to.

The three Persons here, me thinks are evident however; *God the Father*, the *Lord the Son*, and the *Almighty Spirit*, that made all things, that does but blow, and the waters flow; that does but breath, and man lives; that with the least blast does what he will.

Yet these three, it seems, are still but one, *one Lord*, and *one God*, and *one Spirit*, Ephes. iv. 4, 5, 6. all *singulars* here; *nounes, verbs, articles, and participles*, all in the *singular number* here, *ὁ υἱ, ὁ υἱ, ὁ υἱ, ὁ πνεῦμα, ὁ πνεῦμα, ὁ πνεῦμα*, that we might see, though a *Trinity* there be to be believed, yet 'tis in *unity*, though three Personalities, but one Nature, though three Persons, but one God.

All the scruple here can but arise from the setting *Lord the Son*, before *God the Father*; but that's quickly answered, when they tell you, *there is none here afore or after other, none greater and lesser than another*, and therefore no matter at all for the order here, where all is one, and one is all, *Lord God Almighty*.

Yet now to encourage us the better to our Praises and Thanksgivings, see we in the last place the benefits they here praise him for, and they are intimated to us in the close of all, *who was, and is, and is to come*.

In the first, we understand the benefit of our creation. God it was that created us.

In

In the second, we read the benefit of our Redemption, the Lord it is that redeems us daily, pardons and delivers us.

In the third, we have the benefit of our Glorification still to come, the *Holy Spirit* here sealing us, and hereafter enstating us in glory.

In them all together, we may in brief see, as in a Prospect, that all the benefits we have received heretofore, he was the Author of them; that all the mercies we enjoy, he is the Fountain of them; that all the joys or good we hope for, he is the donour of them; he was, he is, he must be the bestower of them all; without him nothing; he was, and is, and will be to us all in all.

And now sure, though I have not the time to specify all the mercies we enjoy from this blessed *Lord God Almighty*, and indeed, had I all time, I could not, and all tongues, *Si mihi sint linguæ centum, sint ora; centum*, I could not, yet we cannot but in gross at least take up a Song of Praise for altogether; say somewhat towards it.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, holy in our Creation, Holy in our Redemption, holy in our Sanctification. Holy in Heaven, holy in Earth, holy under the Earth too. Holy in glorifying of his Angels, holy in justifying his Saints, holy in punishing the Devils; Holy in his Glory, and holy in his Mercy, and holy in his Justice; holy in his *Seraphims*, and holy in his *Cherubims*, and holy in his Thrones; holy in his Power, and holy in his Wisdom, and holy in his Providence; Holy in his Ways, and holy in his Laws, and Holy in his Promises; holy in the Womb, and holy in Manger, and holy on the Cross; holy in his Miracles, and holy in his Doctrines, and holy in his Examples; holy in his Saints, and holy in his Sacraments, and holy in his Temples; holy in Himself, holy in his Son, holy in his Spirit, *Holy Father, holy Son, and Holy Spirit*.

Therefore with *Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of Heaven*, and all the Saints in Heaven and Earth, we laud and magnifie thy glorious Name, evermore praising thee, and saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and Earth are full of the Majesty of thy Glory, Glory be to thee O Lord most High, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come, Glory and Honour, and Thanks be unto Thee for ever and ever, Amen, Amen, Amen.*

THE FIRST SERMON

UPON THE Calling of St. Peter.

St. LUKE v. 8.

—Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.



Strange Speech for him that speaks, to him 'tis spoken, from St. *Peter* to his *Saviour*. One would think it were one of the *Gadarens*, who thus intreated him to depart the Coasts. Strange indeed, to desire him to depart, without whom we cannot be; stranger to give such a reason for it, a reason that should rather induce us to intreat him to tarry than to go; for being sinful men, we have most need of him to stay with us: but strangest of all it is, for St. *Peter* to desire it, and upon his knees to beseech it. To desire Christ to go away from us, to go from us, because we have need of his being with us, and for such a one as St. *Peter*, and that so earnestly to intreat it, is a business we well skill not at the first dash.

Yet if we consider what St. *Peter* was when he so cried out, or what made him to do it, or how unfit he, being a sinful *son of man*, thought himself for the company of the *Son of God*, we shall cease to wonder, and know it is the sinners case for ever so to do, to be astonished at miracles, not to bear suddenly the presence of our Lord, and when we first apprehend it, to cry out to him, with St. *Peter* here, to withdraw from us for a while, for that we are not able to endure the brightness and terrour of his Splendour and Majesty.

It was a miraculous and stupendious draught of Fish (after they had given up all hopes of the least) suddenly came to Net, which thus amazed St. *Peter* and his Fellows. They had drudged and *toyl'd all night*, and not a Fish appeared: but when Christ came to them, then came whole shewles, and thrust so fast into the Net, that they brake it to get in, as if the mute and unreasonable creatures themselves had such a mind to see him, by whose Word they were created, that they valued not their lives, so they might see or serve his pleasure. And yet St. *Peter* makes as much means that he might see him no longer, whom if he had not seen, and seen again, notwithstanding his desires to the contrary, it had been better he had never seen, nor been at all.

Qq q

But

But such is our mortal condition, that *we can neither bear our unhappiness, nor our happiness*; unreasonable Creatures go beyond us in the entertainment of them both, according to their kinds; though it may be, here, *St. Peters* humility speaks as loud as his unworthiness, or inability to endure the presence of his *Lord*.

St. Peter, we must needs say, was not thorowly call'd as yet to be a Disciple; this humble acknowledgment of his own unworthiness to be so was a good beginning. Here it is we begin our Christianity; which though it seems to be a kind of refusal of our *Master* is but a trick to get into his service, who himself is humble and lowly, and receives none so soon as they that are such, none at all but such, whom by the posture of their knees, and the tenours of hearty and humble words, you may discern for such.

And to sum up the whole meaning of the words to a brief Head, they are no other, nor no more than *St. Peters* profession of his own humble condition, that he is not worthy that his *God* and his *Redeemer* should come so near him, and therefore (in an *Extasie*, as it were, at the sight of so glorious a Guest) desires him to forbear to oppress his unworthy servant with an honour he was not yet able to bear.

Yet we cannot but confess, the words may have a harder sense upon them, as the voice of a stupid apprehension, or an insensibleness of such heavenly favours, as our *Saviours* company brings with it. We shall have time to hint at that anon. It shall suffice now at first, to trouble you only with two evident and general parts.

Christs absence desired; And

The Reason alledged for it.

I. Christ desired to be gone, *Depart from me*; And,

II. Why he is so, *For I am a sinful man, O Lord*.

The Desire seems to be the voice of a threefold person, and such is *St. Peters* now:

1. Of a *man*.

2. Of a *sinful man*, and yet,

3. Of an humble man, *Me*, that me here, confessing my self a *sinful man*.

The Reasons equal the variety of the desires, or Desirers.

Three they are too.

1. For *I am a man*.

2. For *I am a sinful man*.

3. For thou, *O Lord*, thou art *God*, and I a *man*.

'Tis a *Text* to teach us what we are, to whom we speak, and how to speak to him. And if you go hence home without learning this, you may say, perhaps, you have heard a Sermon, but you have learnt nothing by it. It shall be your faults if you do not.

And unless we cry in a sense contrary to *St. Peters* meaning, *Depart from us, O Lord*, out of a kind of contempt and weariness of his Word, and not out of the conscience of our own unworthiness of so great a blessing; then though our words be somewhat indiscreet, though we sometimes speak words not fitting for our *Saviour* to hear, though they seem to shew a kind of refusal of him, yet being no other than the meer expression of the apprehension of his glorious presence, and our own unworthiness. Christ will comfort us, and call out to us presently as he doth to *St. Peter*, ver. 10. not to fear: we shall not lose by his Word or Presence, nor by our so sensible apprehension of his glory, though we be but a generation of sinful men. That

That our desires, first may be set right; though peradventure not always speak so, the desires being the hinge upon which good and evil move on their courses, I begin to examine St. *Peters* desire under a threefold consideration : Of *a man*, of *a sinful*, of an humble *man*. For all these St. *Peter* at this time was capable of, and in which of these he speaks most feelingly, will be perhaps anon the *quere*, and how far they may pertain to us, be used, or not used by us, will be the business we are to speak of. If we take all, we are sure to be right.

Then first of the desire, as it is that of *man* or humane nature, considered simply in its own imperfection, unable to bear the presence of a supernatural honour.

Nature sometimes desires God to depart from it. It loves not to be forced out of its course, to be screw'd up beyond it self. *Miracles* are burthens to Nature: and however it be ready to serve the will of the Supreme Mover, yet when it is diverted from its own way, and strain'd to a service or quickness, with which its innate slowness is unacquainted, it does even by its hasting back to its old wont, in a manner, desire to be freed from the present command of its great Controuler.

'Tis so with man, who being of a corruptible make, cannot endure the presence of an incorruptible Essence. Angels and Spirits bring affrightment to it when they come; we are terrified at the presence of an Angel, though he bring us nothing but tidings of the greatest joy. Nay, if we do but think we see a Spirit, (as the Disciples did, when it was was no other than their beloved *Master*) we are wholly frightened and amazed. There is so great a distance between our corrupt Mortality, and their immortal conditions, that we desire not to see them.

Yea, the body it self is so little delighted with the presence of its own best companion, the incorruptible soul, (though it enjoy all its beauty and vigour by it) that by continual reluctances against it, and perpetually throwing off the commands of it, and so daily withdrawing its imaginations from the thoughts of, or converse with that nobler part, it seems to wish it gone, rather than to be bound to that observance which the presence of that divine parcel requires at our hands.

And if it fare no better with these natures of Angels and our own Spirits, which are nearer mortality and imperfection, and have more affinity to us, and full natural engagements upon us, because their excellencies breed either a kind of envy, or terroure to us, that we in a manner say to those that we cannot sunder from us, our very souls, go away, trouble us not with these spiritual businesses, how is it otherwise likely than that we should be ready to avoid the presence of that eternal Purity, in whose sight our best purities cannot stand at all?

We love not to see our own imperfections; that makes us unwilling to endure the presence of any thing that shews us them. Now the divine excellencies above all the rest being that which by its exactness discovers the most insensible blemishes we labour with, you cannot wonder, that a creature so much in love with it self, should desire the removal of that whose nearness so much debases it.

Nor is this all, there is terroure besides at the approach of the *Almighty*. When God drew near to his People upon the Mount, and the People saw the thundrings and lightnings, and the noise of the Trumpet, and the mountain smoaking, conceiving him to be at hand, whose voice is terrible as the thunder, at whose presence the mountains smoke, they removed and stood afar off, *Exod. xx. 18. And ver. 19. they said unto Moses, speak thou with us,*

and we will hear, but let not God speak with us lest we die. Thus at least entreating God to withdraw somewhat farther from them, even lest they should die for fear if he should come nearer them.

We cannot always say such desires are orderly and good, yet such there are, we may say in the best created nature. Indeed we commonly desire what is worst for us, as if we knew not our own good, or did not study it.

Certainly, Gods company can do us no harm. In his presence is life, says the *Psalmist*, yet say we, we die if we see him. *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, says the *Apostle*, Acts xvii. 28. yet say we, if He come to nigh us, or depart not from us, we shall be no more. Thus our thoughts and desires run counter to him.

Nay, there is a Generation that the *Prophet* complains of, that say plainly unto the *Lord*, depart from us, Isa. xxx. 11. We will have none of thy Laws, we desire not thy Precepts, thy Word is a burthen to us, thy solemn Worship we cannot away with, we are weary of thy *Sacraments*, we are sick of thy Truth, thy *Priests* are a trouble to us, thy *Holy Days* take too much time from us, thy *Holy Service* and thy *Holy Things* they are too chargeable for us, take them away and depart from us, we will have none of them any longer. This is more than the voice of Natures imperfection, 'tis the voice of sin and rebellion added to it; but take we heed, lest while we thus thrust God from us, he go indeed and come no more, go away, and leave us in perpetual sin, darkness, and discomfort. It may please God, peradventure, to construe what we have done hitherto as the rash hasty words only of affrighted or disturbed Nature, not knowing which way to turn it self upon a sudden, being amazed at the things that (we know not how) are come to pass in these days; but if we shall persist to desire him to depart (which of all sins has most unthankfulness and impiety, I may add Atheism also, in it) he will go, and he will not return, then shall we seek him early, but we shall not find him: We shall seek him sighing, and weeping, and mourning as we go, but we shall not find him; we shall eat of the fruit of our own way, and be filled with our own devices: but we shall see him no more for ever; then shall we beg for what we have rejected, but he will not hear us, he is departed from us, and will not come again.

Prov. 1. 3.

Thus it was not St. *Peters* desire. He was not tired with *Christs* company, nor glutted with it, as the *Israelites* with their despised *Manna*; only *Christ*, by shewing a Miracle, had so amazed his wits, that he knew not how, on a sudden, to recollect his Spirits to entertain so great and holy a Guest, does therefore, not well considering what to say, desire him to divert a little some whither else, where he might be more honourably entertain'd, or to stand off a while, and give him breath, that he might recover his Spirits, and be able more worthily to entertain him.

But there was somewhat else which made St. *Peter* so express himself. He was not only sensible of his mortal lot, but of his sinful condition too. Thus we are (2.) to consider it, as the voice of a *sinful man*, of humane nature corrupted with sin.

Isa. 6. 2.

Though all created Substances contract a kind of trembling, or drawing back at the approach of God, the very *Seraphims* covering their faces with their wings, yet did not sin and folly cover them with a new confusion, the weakest and poorest of them would draw a kind of solace and happiness

happinefs from the beams of that Majesty that fo afrighted them. 'Tis fin that fpeaks the *Text* in a louder key, that more actually cries to him, not foftly and weakly out of weaknefs, but aloud and strongly out of wilfulnefs, to depart.

It does more then fo. It drives God from us; not only bids him go, but forces him. It is not fo mannerly as to intreat him, it difcourteoufly and unthankfully thrufts him out of doors. *Exi a me, Get you out*, fays the finful foul to God; no *obfecro*, no entreaty added, not go out I pray thee, or depart I befeech thee. We fhould do well to think how uncivilly we deal with God; we are not content to put him out of his own houfe and dwelling, the temples of our bodies, the altars of our fouls, by our fins; nay, and his holy Temples by facriledges and profanenefs, but fometimes in ruder terms, we bid him be gone, and thruft him out by wilful and deliberate transgreffions, by folemn and legal facriledges and profaneneffes, which we commit and reiterate in contempt of him, as if exprefly we faid to him, Go from us, we will have nothing to do with thee any longer: thou fhalt not only not dwell, but not ftand, or be amongst us. The people of *Gennesaret* befought *Chrift* to depart out of their Coafts. Thefe finners will out with him whether he will or no; and though he come again, and knock to be let in, and continue knocking till his head be wet with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, yet can he hear no other welcome from us, then depart from us, we are in bed, well at eafe in our accustom'd fins, and we will not rife to let thee in; we will not be troubled with thy company, with a courfe fo chargeable or dangerous as is thy wonted fervice.

Strange it is, that we fhould thus deal with God, but thus we do; yet no man lays this unkind uſage to his heart, never confiders how he thus dayly uſes God. If good motions ariſe within us, we bid them be gone, they trouble us, they hinder our ſports or projects, our quiet or intereſt. If good opportunities preſent themſelves without, we bid them go, we are not at leiſure to make uſe of them, they come unſeaſonably. If the Word preached deſire to enter in, if it touch our Conſciences and ſtrike home, we bid that depart too, it is not for our turn, it croſſes our intereſts, or our profits, or our pleaſures, we will not therefore have it ſtay any longer with us. If God by any other way, as of afflictions or of deliverances, by bleſſings or curſes, or any other way come to us, they are no ſooner over, nor theſe any ſooner taſted, but we ſend them gone to purpoſe, and think of them again no more; our fins return and ſend them going, make us forget both his juſtice and his mercies.

This is the courſe the ſinner treads to God-ward. From whence it is, that the ſoul thus ill apparell'd with its own fins, dares not look God in the face without the mediation of a Redeemer. She has driven God from her by her fins, and having thus incens'd him, flees away when he draws towards her. Thus *Adam* and *Eve*, having by ſin diſrob'd themſelves of their original righteouſnefs, when they hear the voice of God, though but gently walking towards them, and calling to them, they run away and hide themſelves from the preſence of the Lord amongst the trees of the *Garden*, *Gen. iii. 8*. They felt it ſeems, they wanted ſomething to ſhelter them from the preſence of God, into the thickets therefore they hie themſelves, as if they then fore-ſaw they had need of the *Rod out of the ſtem of Jeſſe*, the *branch out of his roots*, as the *Prophet* calls *Chriſt*, *Iſa. xi. 1*. to bear off the heat of Gods anger from them.

Under

Under the leaves of this branch alone it is that we are covered, sheltered from the wrath to come. His leaves, his righteousness it is that clothes our nakedness; the very garments which our first Parents were fain to get to themselves, before they durst venture again into his presence. There is no enduring Gods presence still, no coming nere him, unless we look upon him through these leaves from under the shelter of this *branch of Jesse*.

Tell the sinner, who keeps not under this shelter, that lies not at this guard, of Gods coming to him, of his looking towards him, of his approach to judgment, and with *Felix* he trembles at it, puts off the discourse to another time, refuses to hear so terrible news, as Gods coming is, if *Christ* came not with him. Such a one has sin made him, that he desires not to see him, whose eyes will not behold sin, *Depart from me, O Lord*, in stead of *Thy Kingdom come*, is his daily Prayer.

Yet, as hardly or unadvisedly as nature or corruption may deliver this speech of *St. Peter's*, it may be delivered in a softer, sweeter tone, and so it was by him. It may (3.) be the voice of the humble spirit, casting himself down at the feet of *Jesus*, and confessing himself altogether unworthy of so great a favour as his presence.

If we peruse the speeches of humble souls in Scripture, by which they accosted their God, or their Superiors, we shall see variety of expression indeed, but little difference in the upshot of the words; *I am but dust and ashes*, says father *Abraham*, *Gen. xviii. 27.* Now how can dust and ashes with their light scattering atoms endure the least breath of the *Almighty*. The Prophet *Isaiah* saw the Lord in a Vision, sitting upon a Throne, and presently he cries out, *wo is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts, Isai. vi. 5.* What? undone *Isaiah*? Yes, *wo is me, I am undone; for mine eyes have seen the Lord of Hosts*, who certainly cannot but consume me, for so boldly beholding him. *I am not worthy* says the *Centurion* to *Christ*, *St. Matth. viii. 8.* that thou shouldst come under the roof of my house; speak the word only; as if his presence were so great he might not bear it. And *St. Paul* as soon as he had told us, that he had seen *Christ*, *1 Cor. xv. 8,* tells us he was *one born out of due time*: was the least of the *Apostles*, and not meet to be called an *Apostle*; as if the very seeing of *Christ* had made him worth nothing. Indeed it makes us think our selves so, of whom we ever think too much, till we look up to God. Then it befalls us, as it fell out to *Job*, *xlii. 5, 6.* *I have heard thee by the hearing of the ear, [but that was nothing] now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.* Hither it is always, that the sight of God depresses us, to think humbly of our selves, that we profess our just deserts to be no other then to be deprived of his presence.

There are like expressions of humble minds towards our Superiours too, in holy Writ. when *Rebecca* saw *Isaac* coming towards her, she lighted down from her Camel, and covered her self with her vail; as if either her humility or her modesty would not suffer her suddenly to look upon his face, who was presently to be her Lord, *Gen. xxiv. 65.* But *Abigail's* complementary humility surpasses, *1 Sam. xxv. 41.* When *David* sent to take her to him to wife, she arose and bowed her self to the earth, and said, behold, let thine hand-maid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord. And *Mephibosheth*, though not so courtly, yet as deeply undervalues himself in the sight of his Lord and King, when he thus answer's *David's* proffer'd

fer'd kindness, 2 Sam. ix. 8. *what is thy servant that thou should'st look upon such a dead Dog as I am?*

Now if *Rebecca* descend from her Camel, and veil her face at the sight of her designed husband; if *Abigail* term her self the servant of the servants of *David*, even to the meanest office, to wash their feet: if *Mephibosheth* count himself a Dog in the presence of King *David*, each of these thus expressing their humility, it is no wonder if *St. Peter* at the presence of his *Saviour*, it is but just that we in the presence of our God and *Saviour*, descend from our Camels, from our Chairs of State, from our seats of ease, from the stools whereon we sit, and bow down our eyes, our hearts and bodies in all humility, as unworthy to look up to Heaven, to look him in the face, whom we have so offended, willing to wash the feet of his poorest servants, to serve him in any thing, in the poorest, meanest way or office, ready to profess our selves amongst the vilest of his creatures, who cannot so much as expect a good look from him.

You may surely guess by the frame of speech (though nature and sin may sometimes use some of the same words) that the tenor of them altogether, is no other then the expression of *St. Peter's* humble acknowledgment of his own vileness.

He confesses plainly he is a *sinful man*; how could he more depress himself, ἀνὴρ ἁμαρτωλός, a man that was nothing but a sinner, a very sinner.

Thence it is, that he thinks himself unworthy, that he should stay with him; therefore desires him, to quit his ship, but much more his company, as far unfit to receive him, or be near about him.

And (3.) whilst he thus confesses himself to be a sinful man, he speaks somewhat doubtfully (at least) to him, as if he conceived him to be the *Lord his God*; thus much however: he acknowledges so great a disproportion between himself and *Christ*, that whilst he knows what to call himself, he knows not well what to style him: to be sure, knows not how to speak, speaks indeed, but knows not what he says, whilst humbly desiring him to depart, he unwittingly parts with his own happiness, not knowing what he desires or does, in this distraction.

These three, an acknowledgment of our own wretchedness, a sensible apprehension of our own unworthiness, and *Christ's* greatness: And (3.) a kind of troubled expression of them, without art or study, are the signs and effects of true humility, and are here caus'd by the consideration of Gods miraculous dealing with us; which commonly shews us Gods Goodness and Grace, his Glory and Majesty, our own weakness, sinfulness, and misery, and by so setting them so suddenly together, render us unable to express either.

In some perverse natures, there arises, we must confess, sometimes a pride upon the receipt of divine favours; so that we may say *St. Peter's* behaviour after so great a miracle shewed towards him, makes his humility the more commendable. A great and wonderful draught of fish he had taken, and he had laboured hard for it: some body would have given at least part of the glory of so good success to his own labour, or at least triumph and gloried highly in it, as if he had been the only favourite of Heaven, the only Saint for his good success: but *St. Peter* saw by his lost labour all the by-past night, an the uncouth multitude of fishes now against hope taken up, that his labour did but little here: there was one with him in the boat he saw, at whose com-
mand

mand the fish came to it in such number. So that now he sees little by himself, or his own endeavour, but that he was not fit company for the Lord that was with him, neither worthy of that miracle, nor of that Master.

Thus good men are humbled, even in their prosperous successes, whilst nothing but miraculous miscarriages can humble the ungodly; and not then neither, to think ere a whit the worse of themselves, or the better of others, or understand, but that God himself is notwithstanding bound still to tarry with them before all the World besides. He is truly humble whom prosperity humbles, who in the midst of his accomplished desires, casts himself below all, acknowledging he is less than the least of Gods mercies, or gracious looks towards him any ways.

There is yet a way that perfect souls, souls elevated above the height of ordinary goodness, have spoke these words. There is sometimes a rapture in heroick souls, over-born, as it were, with the torrent of the contemplations of the divine beauty, and the delights flowing in abundance from it, that some glorious Saints in their several times, have been heard to say sometimes, *Depart from us, O Lord, We have enough, We have enough*, oppresses us not with pleasure which our earthen Vessels are not able to bear.

There have been those that have died with excess of joy: but it was temporal joy, spiritual joy is not so violent to rent the body: yet it even sometimes oppresses the soul into a kind of death, and wraps it beyond it self into an extasie, and after that, it is in danger to be strein'd into another excess of pride or vain-glory; St. Paul was near it, *lest I should be exalted above measure*, (it seems there was great fear of it) there was given him something to humble him, to bring him down from so dangerous a height. It is necessary, it seems, sometimes, if not such a desire, yet such a condition to the most perfect souls, that *Christ* should depart from them now and then, lest they should be puff'd up with the multitude of those Revelations by which *Christ* reveals his presence in them, and his favour towards them.

There are delights in heavenly joys, which these old bottles are not yet able to hold: and here it is, that some have desir'd God to depart a while, to hold a while, lest they should over-flow at least, and lose so pretious a liquor, if not break in pieces and lose themselves in so vast a depth, or at so forcible a pouring in of heavenly pleasures upon them.

But I am too high now for that lean, meagre, creeping goodness, which is only to be found among the sons of men, in these latter days, where we meet with this desire in a lower key, if at all. Our souls, you know, are the vessels of divine grace, old crazie ones, God wot, and there is a danger, lest the new liquor of celestial grace, should cause them to crack, and break at its approach. There is something which we are not able to bear away at first. *Christian Profession* must come in to us by degrees. *Christ* must come a little, and go a little, or come a little, and hold a little; *line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little*, not all at once; no, go away a little, turn aside a little, O Lord, and require not of us all at once, but by degrees visit us, and bear with us: With this kind of entreaty we may desire him to withhold now and then in mercy from us, for we are sinful men, and not able to endure other fuller dealings with us.

And lastly, in humility we may desire God to depart from us, when he approaches

approaches to us in thunder and lightning, when he comes armed like a man of war, then we may cry, and not without cause, O come not to us, or, go from us, for we are sinful men; O Lord, have thou therefore mercy upon us, and forbear us.

We have seen by this time, how we may use St. *Peters*, words, and how we must not use them. We may in humility desire God to withdraw his Judgments, to proportion his Mercies, and to distill them by degrees; to forbear to overthrow our nature, or overwhelm our souls with a happiness above our mortal capacity. We may, lastly, by such a kind of speech, declare the sense of our own unworthiness to receive so glorious a Guest home to us, so even wishing him to chuse a better house to be in, or make ours such. But we must not through natural imperfection, or impatience, draw back our selves from the service of God, or desire him to draw back from us; nor must we at any time by sin cause him to depart, or by perverseness and iniquity thrust him out of doors; nor yet, lastly, grow weary of the gracious effects, and tenders of his Presence, in his Sacraments, Word, and Worship: For so we do not so much confess, as profess, and make our selves to be sinful men; in humility you may sometimes use the words, in impatience never.

We cannot, now you see, say always he does well, that, with St. *Peter*, says to *Christ*, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord*; yet there is something to make the desire, at least, seem reasonable, and often be so, when he says it as St. *Peter* did.

And the first Reason why St. *Peter* desires *Christ* to depart here, is for that he is a man, and the first Reason why we are all so willing to have God gone from us, is because we are men (1.) mutable and inconstant pieces, which are neither well when God is with us, nor when he is from us. If he be with us, then presently, *Fac cessare sanctum Israel à nobis, Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us*, Isa. xxx. 11. We cannot away with that strictness and exactness he requires of us, his ways are not pleasing to us. As soon as he is departed, then we are at another cue *Thou turnedst away thy face, and I was troubled*, Psal. xxx. 7. *Why art thou absent from us so long? why hidest thou thy face from me?* And the like.

Secondly, Man is a mortal nature, a piece of clay. Now earth cannot contain heaven. We cannot endure the thunder, as it roars, or lightnings as they glister, much less him, whose Presence is more terrible, whose Voice more dreadful, who even shakes the Wilderness with his breath, at whose Presence the Earth removes, and hail-stones and coals of fire tumble down.

Thirdly, *Flesh is grass*, we are but hay and stubble, and *God is a consuming fire*, well may mortality then desire him to depart, lest it should consume it in a moment.

Fourthly, It was the opinion of the Jew, that man could not see God, and live, as appears by *Manoah's* speech, *Judg. xiii. 22.* and several other places. St. *Peter*, it may be, had such an imagination, whence it is, he desires *Christ* to depart from him, being no other than God himself, after whose sight he was perhaps afraid he had seen his last.

Thus man, as man, thinks he can spare the Presence of his Lord, as feeling his earthly Cottage altogether unable in it self to entertain him. But (2.) reflecting upon his sin, whereby he is yet made far more unfitting and undeserving such an honour, he desires the absence of God by reason of his sin.

He loves his sin, and is loth to forgo it, and knows God will not be

content to dwell with it, so he wretchedly chuses rather the company of sin than of his God, this is the way that men of the World only speak the *Text*. (2.) Sin even bids defiance to the *Almighty*, and turns him out of doors, that's the reason men so readily bid God depart from them. (3.) Sin so dis-ables the powers of soul and body to any handfom attendance upon heaven, that neither of them know how to receive him if he should come; and besides such a stench and filth there is from it in all the soul, that the Divine Purity cannot endure them. Thus sinful man bids God go from him, because he is a sinful man.

Now comes the last reason why God is entreated to depart, because he is the *Lord our God*. A reason not readily conceived, yet this it is. *Thou art the Lord, a God of pure eyes*, a strickt *Master* over thy servants; a person far above the reach and quality of thy Vassals under thee. They are therefore no fit company for thee. Thou so infinitely transcendest them. These are the Reasons, which *St. Peter* seems to alledge, to perswade *Christ* from his poor wretched company, because both his natural imperfections, and his sinful weakneses, made him unfit for the company, and unworthy the favour of his *Saviour's* glorious Presence.

If we consider the same Reasons, they will serve to humble us as low as *St. Peter* did himself, to think our selves unworthy of the least glance of our *Saviour's* eye; we will confess, if we remember that we are but men, that our frail, inconstant, corruptible nature is not answerable to the glory of so great a blessing; we will acknowledge, if we recollect we are sinful men, that we are not worthy that those eyes should look upon us, that infinite beauty come near our polluted ugliness. We will in a word profess (if we believe he is our *Lord*) we can no less than even desire him to depart, lest he should see too many errors and miscarriages in his servants. Indeed, the whole sum of all is, but to teach us humbly to confess our selves unworthy of such a *Lord and Master*, not worthy of his Miracles, not worthy of his Mercies, not worthy of his Presence, and ways or methods of his Presence, being no better than sinful men. This if you carry home, and lay it up, and practice it, you carry enough for once; and this well done, will be a sure foundation for all Christian virtues.

Yet I will not bid you say, with *St. Peter*, expressly, *Depart O Lord*, or at least when you have said so in humility, say presently again with faith, rather tarry with us *O Lord*, for we are sinful men. Say to God, as *Jacob* did to the *Angel* that wrestled with him, *I will not let thee go unless thou blest me*: Or else, *Lord*, if thou wilt depart, yet come again and take me with thee, though I be a sinful man; or depart *O Lord*, as thou art angry with us, let thine anger go, but turn thy self again in mercy, and be pleased to stay. What though we be sinful men *O Lord*? Yet we are men, thy Creatures, the work of thine own hands, the price of thine own blood. Spare us therefore good *Lord*, and though thou hast departed from us, for a long, too long a season, return again and save us, for we are sinful men, people that have need of thy Presence; never so much as now, who cannot be without it, who though we are not worthy to be with thee, yet we cannot but desire to be with thee for ever and ever. Turn thee then, *O Lord*, and be gracious unto thy Servants, cleanse us from our sins, free us from our iniquities, fit us for thy Presence, compass us with thy mercy, and visit us with thy salvation, salvation here, and salvation hereafter, where we may enjoy thy blessed and glorious Presence for evermore.

THE

THE SECOND SERMON UPON THE Calling of St. Peter:

St. LUKE v. 5.

— *Master we have toyled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.*



He words are a complaint for labour spent in vain, yet not quite without hope of better success. And they are *St. Peters* to *Christ*, at whose word notwithstanding so much pains already lost he fears not to fall to his work again.

And the words have both their *History*, their *Moral*, and their *Allegory*, they tell us what was, and what will be; what was *St. Peters* and his Fellows lot, and what will be ours, both in moral and spiritual employments; to lose all our labour if *Christ*, if God be not by us, if our Master look not over us, if his Word be not with us, both to direct us what to do, and to bless us in the doing. They, here, toyl'd all the night, and took nothing; that's the *History*. Men often toil and labour day and night, and catch as little; that's the *Moral*. Nay, Gods own Labourers, his Fishermen, fish and fish, labour and take pains, and catch nothing; that's the *Allegory*. Now what's the reason, but because God is absent all the while? For that as man lives not, so he thrives not but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. All we prosper or profit is by the power and vertue of his Almighty Word; and in the power of that Word we must let down our Nets if we look for a draught; and though we have laboured all this while and caught nothing, or but little, or though it must be still our Lot to labour still and get nothing, yet in confidence of that Word we must let down again (and now we do) yea, though it be his pleasure that our Net return again both empty and broken.

I will not meddle now with *St. Peters* Story as he was a Fisherman; what he sometimes was it matters not, *God respecteth no mans person*. I shall consider him only under these two notions: As a man, one of the same common fortune with the Sons of men; and as a Fisher of men, one selected by the great Master of the World to ensnare the souls of men,

to bring them to his own table ; and in this sense I divide the words into *generals* :

1. *St. Peters* and his *Partners* ill *success*, that they toil'd all night, and took nothing.
2. His *conclusion* yet to go to his work again upon Christs command, and confidence of better issues, *Nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.*

In the First, whether consider *St. Peter* under the common condition of men, as a man, or under the nature of an *Apostle*, as a man *separate* to a holy Function, to deal with bringing other men to the Kingdom of heaven through his Ministry and Office, we have these particulars :

1. That all our labour by it self is but toil and misery if Christ be not in it to lighten those words, *we have toil'd.*
2. That 'tis uncomfortable, as being in the *night*, a sad dolesom time if Christ be not by to *enlighten* it.
3. That 'tis vain and unprofitable, we *get nothing* by it all if he be not with us to direct and bless us ; *we have toil'd all night, and taken nothing.*
4. That be it whose it will, how seasonable soever, be we as wise and politick in it as we can, be we never so industrious in our trades or Works, so it will be. *we*, we men that well enough know our Trade, we who have toil'd, and omitted no pains, we who have toil'd all night, fail'd in no point of art or time, we yet, even *we* have taken nothing all the while that Christ was not with us.
5. That of this we may and must sometimes complain, with *St. Peter*, to our *Master*. *Master, we have toil'd, &c.* Complain we may, yet not be discouraged for all that, or lay down our Work, for in the second general we have several particulars against it.

II. Not to leave off work, but to resolve to set to our work again, and hereafter to direct it better, to guide and set it by his Will and Word, that so it may thrive and prosper.

1. To do it *at his word*, that is, readily, whensoever, or as soon soever as he commands.
2. *At his Word*, that is, obediently, for *his Word* sake, upon his Command and Word.
3. *Nevertheless at his Word*, that is, confidently, notwithstanding all that *Flesh* or *Reason* can say against it.
4. And lastly, resolutely, to resolve, come what will upon it, we will do it. *Nevertheless at thy Word I will let down the Net.*

I begin with *St. Peters* ill success, and that's no comfortable beginning ; but 'tis the beginning of the *Text*, and I love order every where, though it cost never so dear to keep that.

Well then, We have *toiled all the night*, says *St. Peter* for himself and his Partners, and *have caught nothing*. So say I first for me and my Partners, my Partners and Fellows in nature, for all, or most of the Sons of men, and my Partners and Fellows in Office and Ministry, the Ministers of Christ. *we have toil'd, &c.* I am to speak of all our labours, that all of them, even the best of them, are first but toil and misery.

For the labours of the Sons of men that have nothing else to sweeten them but earth, that they are toils you need ask no body but your selves. Your very pleasures are toils and weariness ; tell me, the sweetest and easiest of your delights and recreations, if they do not quickly weary you,

you, and grow toilsom to you. Let it be hunting, or hawking, or running, or walking, let it be any other exercise of the body, let it be your more *quiet* and sedentary recreations, let it be but talk and discourse you are weary often before the day runs out, and out of wearisomness change your seats, and stations, and postures, and discourses too.

And if your *Pleasures* prove in effect but *toils*, what, think you, do your labours do? To rise up early, and go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulness? To break your rests, to wear out your bodies, to consume your Spirits, is it not a toil somewhat more than labour? Yet thus is all our labour under the Sun, when Christ is absent from us; for what is there to sweeten any of our labours when God is gone? Call up the choicest of those aims you propound as ends to your pains, and rewards to your labours, and tell us, if you can, whether they be able to take off the sorrow and trouble from your work, or make amends for them at all. Riches they are some mens aim, and are not they as troublesome as the ways you got them by? Do they not afflict as much in the keeping, and disposing, as they did in the getting? Pleasures are others aims, and I have told you already what they are, whose very pursuit or enjoyment is as wearisom as your work. Honours are other mens aims; and what has honour in it that is not burthensom but a name? Nay, even *that* too, sets a man upon the rack to behave and demean himself with a kind of niceness and scrupulous observance of a respect due to such a title or place, in which he is as much pain'd sometimes as in little-ease, or a narrow prison. These ends then not being able to take off the nature of toil from the means and endeavours by which they are pursued, there can be nothing said to quit our labours from the true titles of toils and miseries.

Miseries, indeed, as well as toils, if God be not with them, for without him we cannot but be miserable, we, and all we do; we, and all we have. *Samson* grinding at his Mill is in more ease and happiness than we without Christ. All our works are like Spiders Webs, good for nothing but to catch flies, that is, impudent and importunate desires, which are the daily issues of our ill-spent hours; for our desires and lusts encrease with our labours, and add to their toil; they suffer us to take no rest neither day nor night; even upon our beds they trouble us, and make our downy feathers as hard as rocks and marble; the covetous man cannot sleep for the importunate buzzings of his desires, nor the ambitious man for his, nor the luxurious man for his, their eye-lids cannot sleep, nor can the temples of their head take any rest for the swarms and hummings of their inordinate passions.

The case is somewhat better with him whose labour is for God, but it is somewhat alike when it finds no success, a meer toiling of the Spirits; Our studies, and pains, and preachings do but wear out our bodies, and afflict our souls, when we only go round, as in a circle, without fastning any where, when we effect nothing with all our pains. Men think the Ministers have an easie life of it; but if they knew their down-sittings, and their up-risings, the travel of their pains, even to a sickness, the labour of their minds even to distraction, the perplexity of Opinions that molest them, the hard task of reconciling differences that daily lies sore upon them, the diversity of Judgments that distracts them, the care of their Pastoral Charge that night and day tortures them, their toiling whole nights, even without a figure, that wear them out, the little esteem, after all this, of all their pains and persons that dejects their spirit;

spirits; the less success of their endeavours that grieves them to the souls and heart; if men would but understand the sad toil of these labouring thoughts as well as labours, together with those indispositions of body, that usually grow upon them, and those forc'd retirements, or debarments from those just pleasures and recreations that men of other conditions lawfully enough indulge themselves, they would confess freely that our labour too, if we abstract it from the relation it has to God is but toil and misery.

And (2.) as uncomfortable too as yours, as any else can be; for what more uncomfortable then to see so many years of preaching and praying, reading and studying return back upon us without success? and yet 'tis common; to have employed all our time and means, and industry many years, and to come at last to our Master with this heavy account, *Master we have fished all night, all fishing time, and have caught nothing?* and yet 'tis usual.

Yet thus uncomfortable is all our work, when God pleases to withdraw from us. Hence it is that *Moses* draws back so fast, and would fain avoid Gods embassie. He fore-saw it would prove but an uncomfortable piece of work, *Exod. iii. 11. & Chap. iv. 10, 13.* Hence *Isaiab* cries out so complainingly, *who has believed our report?* *Isai. liii. 1.* Hence *Jeremiah* grows sad, and out of heart, and bemoans himself, *Jer. xv. 10. Wo is me my mother, that thou hast born me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth. I have neither lent on usury, nor have men lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me.* Heres something indeed to make our case less comfortable than any others, that do we never so well, live we never so justly; if, with Christ, we live like other men after the ordinary fashion, then behold friends of Publicans and Sinners: if somewhat strictly, with St. *John Baptist*, in fastings and rigours, then behold, *they have a Devil*, we are Superstitious and Popish, nothing pleases them; use we people never so fairly, we are always sure to be oppos'd, to be contradicted, to be evil spoken of, even in those things wherein we deserve not; and which is sadder yet, to have those which are committed to our care seduced from us easily, and by troops, and seduced from God, even by those who care not for their souls, but for their fleece, and for the glory of making *Profelytes*, and by that children of Hell (at least) as much as themselves; all this notwithstanding the painfullest of our endeavours.

Thus, of all kind of labours the Ministers, if Gods Word be not by to comfort them, is in natural reason the most uncomfortable. Yet (2.) there is no comfort in any, where *he* is not. All mens labours have something of night and sad darkness with them, where that eternal Sunshine does not come and clear up the coasts. The wicked man, he toils and moils, but finds no comfort, the blackness and horror of his own sins continually afright him. The natural man he works and labours, but he finds no comfort; none of his works can open him so much as a window into Heaven, either to be received in, or even to see into it: without faith it is impossible to see comfort thence. The *Jew* he labours and sees no comfort of his work, 'tis high night with him; *Moses* veil is upon his eyes, the shadows are still upon him, and he sits down in darkness. The ignorant man he sees no comfort in his endeavours, for he goes on and toils and moils, and sees not, minds not Heaven at all; nor is there any labourer in the world, but he that works upon Christs Word, in his presence, and by his assistance, that meets any comfort in

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any thing he does. The strong man has no comfort in his strength, nor the rich man in his riches, nor the great man in his honors, (all of them but a discontented crue) if this Sun of Righteousnes make it not day unto them. All these mens labours are in the night, the night of ignorance, where there is no light at all, or the night of Nature, where it is but star-light, or the night of the Law, where it is but Moon-light; or the night of sin, where all these little lights are dimm'd, and the great one of grace put out quite. There is no light in any of these to comfort us, wherein to rejoyce; nay, all the goods of the world, all that we daily strive and strein, and spend our selves for, cannot afford the least true comfort or refreshment to an afflicted soul; for get we what we can, catch what catch we may, we do but toil all night and catch nothing, if Christ or his grace be absent from us. Our labours also are, thirdly, *unprofitable*, where the darknes either drives out, or admits not the bright Sun of Glory; where our toil and labour is in the night.

3. He that works in any of the aforesaid nights, his labours profit not, he shall take nothing. To run through them particularly; The *Gentile* he is the first night-worker, he toils and labours and works indeed, but can neither find out the knowledg of the truth, nor attain the practice of true vertue, finds no benefit of all his labour. He walks on, says St. *Paul*, in the *vanity of his mind, his understanding being darkned*, Ephe. iv. 17, 18. *their imaginations vain, and their foolish hearts hardened*, Rom. i. 21. They neither know wherein consists happiness, nor how to come by it. Their wise men are divided in their opinions about it, and themselves wholly estrang'd from it; *alienated from the life of God*, says the *Apostle*, Ephes. iv. 18. They can catch nothing with all their busie Inquisition, but a meer profession to be wise, and professing, Rom. i. 22. *they became fools*; a pretty catch of it.

2. The *Jew* he labours much to as little purpose, and indeed he labours in the night too, for his day is done, his time is past, *Jewish* Religion dead and gone, and nothing now to be gain'd by that. When it was at the best with them they received not the Promise, Heb. xi. 39. they labour'd indeed, but caught little in hand; the full promise, that, was kept for us, that they *without us should not be made perfect*, ver. 40. their burnt-offerings and Sacrifices for sin could not truly purifie them one whit, all were but figures, their whole Religion but one great Type of ours, their brightest day but night to ours. At the descending of this eternal Word was all to be perfected, nothing to be obtain'd but from him and by him, at whose arriving only first appear'd the day, and with him the only draught worth drawing up.

3. When any man is involv'd in the night of his own sins, all his works also will prove unprofitable whilst he is so. God will not hear him; his sins they cannot profit him, (whatever they pretend, how fair soever they promise him) for what *fruit had you then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed*, Rom. vi. 23. no fruit, but much shame. Nay, his good works in that estate, how fair so ere they seem, will do him as little service; *Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burn'd, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing*. 1 Cor. xiii. 3. *His prayer shall be turn'd into sin*, Psal. cix. 7. *His fastings shall not be accepted*, Isai. lviii. 5. His very tears shall be neglected, as *Esa's* were, Heb. xiii. 17. He shall get nothing by all his works, all his labour but grief and sorrow; for without this heavenly flame of divine Charity (which is put out by sin) to enlighten that night, even good works themselves will gain

us nothing; all of them together, will do us no good, but as done in the faith of his Word, whose Word is in the Text; in the efficacy of his command, at whose command *Peter* again lets down his net. Without his Word and presence too to quicken us out of our sins, 'tis but toiling all night, all our labours nothing else.

4. No mans labours or endeavours at all can avail any thing as from themselves; not only as to the gaining of an eternal reward, (to which they carry no proportion) but not of a temporal happiness neither. *Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that built it*, Psal. cxxvii. 1. A mans trade cannot help him: *Except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain*, ver. 2. A mans vigilance will not keep him. It is but lost labour that thou hast to rise up early and go to bed late, and eat the bread of carefulness; no care or pains can gain that man any thing, whom God does not vouchsafe to prosper. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all*; that is, Gods Providence that by changes of times, and intermixing of accidents and contingencies disposes all, says the Wise man, *Eccles. ix. 11.* and 'tis the blessing of the Lord that *maketh rich*, says the same good man, *Prov. x. 22.* 'tis uncomfortable being rich without that blessing.

5. But above all, the blessing upon our labours, the Ministers labours is from God. We may be instant in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and patience, though we should speak with the tongue of Men and Angels, words of life and spirit; though we should every day preach with *St. Paul*, even to midnight, and call out to you to hear and obey, till we were hoarse with speaking, and can speak no more; yea, though we should speak with that passion, as if our own souls were melted into it, and were distilling with our words, and so continue from day to day, till our day were over-clouded in everlasting night; yet it might be with all this pains we might catch nothing. 'Tis what I need not stand to prove; *Moses* and *Elijah*, and *Jeremiah*, and all the Prophets are sufficient witnesses some time or other of vast labours spent in vain. And the times our own eyes have seen, and do yet behold are too unhappy an evidence of many mens whole lives and ministeries thus spent in vain, where Christ pleases to withdraw himself either from the Minister, or from the People.

And indeed, this is the least wonder of all the rest: the gaining of souls being Gods proper business; and therefore never like to be done without him. We fish but in the night, as if we knew not what we did, nor saw how to cast our nets to any advantage without him. At his Word only, the net is rightly spread; at his Word only the waters flow and bring in apace; he calls and the fishes come amain, and till he himself either calls or come, we catch nothing.

4. Nay, to come to the *fourth* Particular, though we omit no pains, but even toil and labour what we can, nor slip no time, but even break our sleep, and take in the nights; nor fail of any opportunity, but take every hour of the night, ready all the night long, upon the least occasion; nor neglect any policy or art to help us, but make it our whole labour and business every way to gain our intentions, though we be never so great, or good, so wise or subtle, so many or so powerful, we shall gain nothing but labour and sorrow by the hand, unless God be with us.

1. Toil it self, and labour, catches nothing; *we have toiled all night and caught nothing*; all our labour is but as the running round of a mill, or the turning of a door upon the hinges, never the further for all its motion. Consider your ways, says the *Prophet*, you have sown much and bring in little; he that earneth wages earns it to put into a bag with holes, *Hagg. i. 6.* he gains somewhat, as he thinks, and lays it up, but when he looks again for it, it is come to nothing. He that gave his mind to seek out the nature and profit of every labour under the Sun, returns home empty, only with this experimental saying in his mouth, *Eccles. ii. 22.* *What has a man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the Sun? for all his days are sorrows, and his travel grief: a goodly catch for all his pains.*

2. All the attendance upon times and seasons will effect no more, if you separate from Gods special benediction, *we have toil'd all night and yet caught nothing.* Let a man serve seven years for a fortune or preferment, as *Jacob* did for *Rachel*, and in the morning his fair and long'd for *Rachel*, will prove but bleer-eyed *Leah* at the best. Whatever it is he gets, 'twill be but misery to him, or a false happiness. Or let him lie waiting with the bed-ridden man at the Pool of *Bethesda*, eight and thirty years for the moving of the waters, he will always be prevented, be never able to get in, till Christ come to him; yea, let him wait out all his years, and draw out his days in perpetual expectations and attendances for some happy Planet, some propitious hour, he will never see it, unless God speak the word and command it to him. These fishers in the Text had even chose their time and spent it out to the last minute; the best time to fish, when the eye of the sporting fish could not see the net that was spread to entangle them, nor perceive the hand or shadow of him who subtilly laid wait to take them, the time of night; and they pursued their labour till the day came on, *all the night*, says the Text, yet nothing they could catch, they lost their labour and their hope. Just thus it is, when men having, as they think, diligently made use of the opportunity, and expected it out, having never thought of God all the while, find themselves at last no neerer the end of their desires, then they were at the beginning. Your own eyes see it by many daily experiences that it thus oft falls out.

3. Policy comes ever and anon as short of its aims where God is set aside. Though men be oft so cunning in all the arts of thriving, that nothing seems to escape their reach; though the net seem full with fish, their fields stand thick with corn, and their garners full and plentiful with all manner of store, yet draw up the net when the night is gone, when the clear day appears to shew all things as they are, and behold, in all these they have taken nothing; their souls, the best fish, are lost and gone by their unjust and wicked gains, the true fish is slipped away, and there is nothing but the scales and slime, a little glittering earth, or slimy pleasure left behind. Thus meer policy, I mean, such as God is not remembred in, proves ever at the last. But it is oft-times seen, that such policies even deceive them of their own intentions too, and they fall commonly by what they had determin'd as steps to rise by. *Laban* thinking to enrich himself by his covetous bargain, changes *Jacob's* wages ten times, but still changes for the worst: If *Laban* says to *Jacob*, the speckled shall be thy wages, then all the Cattel bare speckled; if he say, the ring-straked shall be thy hire, then all the Cattel bear ring-straked, *Gen. xxxi. 1.* because God was with *Jacob*

and not with *Laban*. These men here, cunning sure enough at their Trade in which they were bred up, having pickt out their time, and cast on every side of the Ship, tried all their Art, all their tricks, and sleights, (for we cannot but think, that being so often disappointed, they used all their skill) yet for all that *they caught nothing*, for Christ was not there. *Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, saith the Prophet, it hath perverted thee*, Isa. xlvii. 10. And *thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels*, ver. 13. These are of no power if once God leave us. Nay, they serve all to nothing but to pervert us if Christ be not in them; all our wisdom and counsels but ignorance and folly without the presence of this eternal Wisdom, this great Counsellor.

4. We, be we never so great, never so good, never so many, never so wise, may toil and trouble our selves, and all for nothing. *All the men whose hands are mighty have found nothing*, Psal. lxxvi. 5. great men may fail as well as others. Nay more, *Peter* here and his Partners were good and honest men, yet success does not always answer such mens Labours neither; here they fish, and after Christs Resurrection again, St. *John* xxi. 3, 6. They fish all night, but catch nothing till Christ came to them; there's good men labouring and catching nothing. And many they were together, they joyn hands, and heads, and all their implements, yet 'tis all to no purpose. *Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunish'd*, Psal. xi. 21. And though hand joyn in hand to bring matters to pass, the issue and event comes from above. A multitude is nothing against the Lord of Hosts, no, nor without him. There's many joyn'd together and effecting nothing. And then again, there's *Solomon*, a wise man, the wisest of the earth, after all his search and labour coming back with nothing but *Vanity of vanity, all is vanity and vexation of spirit*. He found it not scientifically only, but experimentally, not only by happy knowledge, but unhappy experience also, too sad a truth. And all this to inform us in this one truth, that there is neither skill, nor labour, nor strength, nor policy, nor time, nor opportunity of any prevalence, not only against the Lord, but without him too.

We must not, after all these men, think much, nor must you, that men of our Order should toil and labour day and night and catch nothing. The Text says *we*; 'tis a common misery, that's some comfort, that 'tis not a personal lot, but a common condition to others with us: And in this *we* there's a better *We* than we our selves, St. *Peter* and his Fellows must be reckon'd. 'Tis St. *Peters* the greatest Fishers fortune to be sometimes disappointed of the end of his labours. It may be so much the rather his, and such as *he*, Christs skilfullest, greatest fishers, such as with him, here, fish in the deep, even because they do so, whilst a company of petty Fishermen, that stand by the shore, and fish in the shallows, catch fish enough. Will you know the reason?

St. *Peter* and his followers lay deep, in the depth of heaven, and catch few fish, because the fish are of the world, and therefore savour not heavenly baits, care not to leap so high, they are for watry, fading, transitory pleasures. But others that fish upon the shore, that stir not from the earth, that stand up and preach nothing but earthly interests and respects, who fish with flies, vanities, and follies, or earth-worms, earthly Arguments, or cast into the Shallows of vain fancies and inventions, who make Religions of their own, every day new. These catch fish enow, because perhaps the silly fish, the frie at least, are most delighted with such baits.

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We might have thought it had been these mens faults, that having fish'd all night they took nothing; but that they were fishermen by their Trade, expert in the Art, such as were brought up to it, and liv'd by it: There's therefore something more in it than so. The great Governour of Sea and Land would not suffer those Inhabitants of the water to come at that time, as at others, into the Net. 'Tis Gods disposing hand that thus deceives the Net of its expected prey, and we must be content. *Noah* was a good man, and *Lot* was a good man, and great men both, yet *Noah* preaches repentance to the Old World, and *Lot* afterward to the men of *Sodom* without any success; the one preacht one hundred and twenty years, the other all the time he staid in *Sodom*, yet not one soul gain'd by all their labour. Many wise men and Prophets have had as sorrowful success. Miserable is the case the while that the devil thus out-fishes us. Yet so it is; take we what pains we can, though we were more thoroughly read in *St. Pauls* practice than we are, in fastings often, in watchings oft, in hunger and thirst, in fears and anxieties, in cares and painfulness; watch we our times never so punctually, and fish we never so studiously in the night, when the passions are at rest, and the deep silence of the night upon them, no noise or distractions, as we would think, to hinder the distinct hearing of the Word of Christ; use we never so much Art and Policy, so much Rhetorick and Argument to perswade, so that one would think we could not possibly but take; yet even thus our hopes may be deluded, because nothing comes to Gods Net, but what he brings.

We may then first comfort our selves, if we have done our utmost, if we have discharg'd our duty, that however this unhappiness betide us, yet we are not alone, nor is it our fault though our misfortune. *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* water, yet both be in the same lot with us, if God give not the encrease. Nay, God himself seems to be in the same case, whilst he complains, *All the day long have I stretched out my hand to a disobedient and gain-saying people.* And you all also may chear up your souls in your honest and painful labours, though peradventure they succeed not; however that you have done your duty, and rest now only upon the hand of God to second you and give success; which if it do, you presently grow up and prosper; if not, Gods over-ruling Providence, and wiser disposing goodness, well thought upon, will easily teach you to be content.

And (2.) remember this taking nothing may prove at last more profitable than the greatest draught you ever did or could expect. *St. Peter* and his fellow-fishers by catching nothing caught every thing, because *him*, who is all in all, who thus call'd them to himself by the occasion of their ill success. And when the worst of casualties betide us let us think, that though all our hopes and expectations fail us, all our labours languish away in utter despair, and we be left confounded with the miscarriages of all our pains, yet God can so order it, that out of nothing all things, all good things may one day after happen to us; and though he will give us nothing else, yet he will give himself at last, and upon this not only be comforted, but rejoyce in our miscarriages.

And (3.) that we may descend to the last particular of *St. Peters* ill success. Though we may comfort our selves a little in the frustration of our hopes, that it so pleases God to order them, and must therefore well be pleased because it is his pleasure, and rejoyce sometimes too that we are by such means drawn to God ere we are aware: Yet we may complain to him also, lastly, of the same business, and cry out, with *St. Peter*,

ter, Master we have toiled all the night and taken nothing.

'Tis an usual thing to complain of a misery, or miscarriage, and 'tis as usual to complain to those whom it either does not concern to know it, or who cannot help us. But this complaint here is set right, to Christ it is, and he's our Master to whom we are to account for the works of our calling, for the works both of day and night.

And therefore to thee, first; Master, we complain that we are no better servants, that we are not worthy to call thee Master, that we are unprofitable servants.

Next we complain that we have wearied our selves in the ways of vanity, in the works of darkness, and have lov'd the night too well, and the works of darkness more than light.

Then we complain that all our labours are but toils and sorrows.

Then again we bemoan our sad condition, that *we*, even the best of us, that *we*, even all of us, can say no better for our selves.

Yet lastly we complain again, that notwithstanding all our toil and labour, notwithstanding thou art our Master, and we thy servants, for all our hours and pains spent upon our work we have caught nothing. Were it never so little gain, it would not grieve us; were it but a few little Fishes (they might serve for thousands) yea, but one, something, any thing, it would not so afflict us: But this [nothing] is of hard digesture, this [nothing] in every thing troubles us, every way perplexes us. So much the more in that it comes often from our own fault, or we may justly fear it, that we thus miscarry. However, 'tis a thing we may well complain of, as by such complaints even desiring him to give us better success in the rest of our labours.

But whether he will do that or no, if he command us to go on, we must do so still; all other businesses notwithstanding, whatever success past or to come, *nevertheless*, at his word we must let down the Net; which is our *Second general* to resolve notwithstanding all former lost pains and labours to fall yet, upon his word, to our work again.

The Net in *moral* businesses, is all those several ways and means by which our actions catch their several ends and take effect; and to let down these nets is to apply our selves to the pursuits of our desires and intentions by ways and means probable to effect them.

In *spiritual* employments: The Net to fish for men is commonly the Word truly preached; the threds are the words of perswasion, the knots the Arguments of Reason, the Plumets are the Articles and grounds of the Faith. This Net is to be wove by study and pains, to be let down and loosed by Preaching, to be gathered up by calling men to account of what was heard, what they have done upon it; 'tis washt and cleans'd by our tears and prayers, and spread and dried by our charity and mortified affections. And this is the Net that we must let down, though we catch nothing. And at his word it is to be let down, his word to be the length and breadth, the whole rule and measure of all *our* Sermons, all *your* Actions. Leave off our work we must not, because it does not answer us with success, but to our work again, and see where we err'd, and mend it, find what was the occasion of our ill success, our taking nought, and avoid it. If we prided our selves too much in our own skill or wisdom, or trusted too much upon the goodness of our own works and labours, or, through the darkness of ignorance could not well see what to do, or through the thick night of sins miscarried in it, or for want of Gods implor'd assistance miss'd of our success, let us now mend all, by
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ruling our selves, and all our actions, according to his Word. His Word will teach us that Art which shall not fail us; his Word shall give us humility to cast deep enough; his Word will be a Lantern to enlighten our night, that we may see our way, and what to do; his Word will bring us near himself, that we may the better hear his counsel, and obey his voice, and bring him nearer us that he may bless us. And so certainly he will, if, with St. Peter here, whatever has befall us, or is like to do, we *nevertheless* at his Word again let down the Net, (1.) readily, without delaying; (2.) obediently, without murmuring; (3.) confidently, without disputing; (4.) resolutely, without wavering.

And indeed, at his Word to do it, is to do it (1.) *readily* for a word speaking, not to expect command upon command, with St. Peter, even to be griev'd to be bidden again and again, to have our love or duty call'd so much in question as to hear a second or third injunction to it. Our former hard hap must not make us to demur, but rather hasten us to our work again to make amends for our former losses. Abraham leaves his Country, and his Fathers house for a word speaking: God did but speak, and away presently goes the Father of the Faithful, Gen. xii. 1, 5. *What ever thy hand findeth to do, do it instantly*, says the *wiseman*, Eccle. ix. 10. but if God speak to thee once to do it, let the Word be no sooner heard than thy hand in action. Do what thou art to do readily, do it chearfully. That *First*.

2. At his word to do it, is to do it *obediently*; to do it for his Word, for *his* speaking, because he commands it, *at thy word*. Actions are then only done in obedience when they are done for *his* sake who commands, and because he commands them. He that here pleads his own respects, that preaches for his own ends, or does any thing only to satisfy or content himself, that frames his actions for gain or pleasure, he aims at nothing but himself, and does not those labours at Christs word, or in the power of it. He does it properly at Christs word, that looks for no other reason of his actions but his Command and Will; nor propounds any other intention to himself but a full submission to Gods will and pleasure, that's reason enough to the truly obedient soul, that God commands it.

3. And upon this it is that we expound, *Nevertheless* at thy Word, to be in confidence of the truth and vertue of that Word above all words besides, above all reason besides. St. Peter with his Company had fish'd and toil'd in fishing all the night, the fittest time to fill their Nets, and yet nothing would be caught. It was against all reason and experience to expect any thing now, they themselves, too, being over-wearied with their toil; yet he disputes not with his Lord: but, as if he confest he could teach him better, he (1.) calls him *Master*; and (2.) as if his Word were of more power than all their skill and experience far, he rests himself wholly upon that. And yet more; as if the very loosing or letting down now of the Net upon his bare word alone were enough to bring up a full draught of fish, he makes mention no longer of his own pains or labours, as if they could any thing avail, but professes only to *let down the Net*, confident now by the power of his Word only to obtain what neither his Art nor labour could procure before, nor reason perswade him to at any time, nay, what *all they* perswade him now against. This is the right rule of faith and obedience, even against hope to believe in hope, to believe his Word above our Reason, to neglect all petty, under-scruples, to rely wholly upon his authority. It was *Abra-*
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hams glory that he considered not his own body now dead, nor the deadness of *Sarahs* Womb, considered not the strength of nature when Gods Promise came above it, *Rom. iv. 19.* that he was so ready to offer up *Isaac*, in whom God had promised him to call his Seed; as if he believed God could raise him up again being dead, or else some way or other make good his Promise, which was made in *Isaac*, and that he would do it to though *Isaac* were made a Sacrifice, and so no natural or reasonable possibility left him for any such hope: Yet nevertheless do he would as God commanded, offer up *Isaac* at his word as readily here as *St. Peter* let down his Net.

Nevertheless, lastly, *at thy word we will*; whether, that is, he please to bless us according to our wish or not, whether we shall bring up fish or no, whether he will have us take or not, we will let down the Net because he bids us. To the former confidence is to be added resolution. As we know and are confident he can by his Word do what he will, so whether he will do it, yea, or no, yet for his Word, because it is his will that we should still continue on our labours and work, we will do so, we will let down the Net, come what will come of it. Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, Preach we must; for *Woe is me*, says the Apostle, *if I preach not the Gospel*; the command is hard upon us. And whether your works be like to prosper in your hands as you desire, or whether not, labour still you must, and not be idle. To toil all night and catch nothing is uncomfortable, yet to toil all night and catch nothing, and yet to toil again, is constancy and resolution, and may challenge the reward of no petty vertue at his hands who so esteems and accepts it. You shew as much daily in temporal affairs: Ye work, and toil, and lose your labour, yet you try again; you plow and sow, and sometimes bring home little, yet you plow and sow again. Be we but as resolute in our spiritual affairs, and work, and they will succeed at last to purpose, to make a recompence for all former misfortunes. If your Prayers after a whole night return empty, if your endeavours to repentance and amendment, if your wrestling with temptations, or struggling for mastery with your passions and sins, be not presently answered with success, but you yet groan under the dominion of them, not yet fully able to resist temptations, nor to leave off your sins, or break off your transgressions, if you cannot by some nights and days of exercise and endeavour obtain yet those graces and virtues you desire; endeavour yet again, strive, and pray, and labour yet again, and in his name and word pursue your work. In his name you cannot miscarry at the last, your Net will come at length full fraught with grace and glory.

You see the very Apostles of Christ are in the like condition, many nights and days toil and labour brings them nothing home, yet they still fish again, and so must we, if at last we may gain but one poor soul into the Net of the Kingdom; nay though but save our own. And if none but that, yet we must let down the Net for more, not despair of more; there may come more at length: We must preach, and you must hear, again and again, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little, cast on this side, cast on that, in season and out, night and day with all patience and long suffering, as the Apostle speaks, if so be at last that Jesus will deign to come unto us, that he will vouchsafe to speak effectually to his servants, and make them hear, that he will please to stand by and call the fish into the Net.

Master,

Master, we have now at thy word let down the Net, O speak the word only and thy Servants shall hear thee, and hasten to thee, and obey thee, and be wholly taken by thee. Our labours are vain without thy blessing, nothing in them but weariness and toil, have mercy upon this our sad and uncomfortable condition, and relieve us, both the Fishers and the Fish, and lift us up out of this Sea of misery, this depth of iniquity, catch us *all* together in thy Net, and us unto thy self into thy Kingdom where there is no more toil or labour, no more night at all, no more tempestuous Seas or weather, where we are sure to catch that which is above all our labours, all our toil; a full and sufficient recompence for them all, the over-ful, infinite and unspeakable rewards of eternal glory.

R. D. July 3 1849.

A
S E R M O N
UPON THE
Transfiguration.

St. LUKE ix. 33.

And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three Tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; not knowing what he said.



AND St. Peter, when he thus said he knew not what, was in the Mount with Jesus, Moses and Elias, and saw their glory. One cannot blame him for crying out, 'twas good being, good building there; though somewhat there was in it that was amiss, it seems, when St. Luke tells us, he knew not what he said. But methinks, the words would sound nothing amiss at all, if they had been taken up by us upon our late being with Christ in the holy Mount at the holy Table, or if used still in reference to that good meeting, *Master it is good for us to be here* in thy holy presence, let us build *Tabernacles*, tarry here, go down no more henceforward in our affections to earth, or earthly things; Let us build here *Tabernacles* for thee, for Moses and Elias, that neither thy Gospel, Law, nor Prophets may go from us, never henceforth depart out of our hearts and mouths. Sure there is no error in such a speech of ours, whatever was in St. Peter's.

Indeed somewhat there was faulty in St. Peter's, as there is commonly in the most of our best words and actions, *somewhat more or less* (at least) then should be in rigor, if God should enter into judgment with them. The sudden apprehension of unexpected or extraordinary joy or happiness, be it spiritual or be it temporal, makes many affections and expressions arise in the best of us somewhat irregular sometimes. Our business at this time, and upon these words is to rectify them, by considering what was here short or over in St. Peter's, what to be left, and what followed in them, that we may learn how to bear our happiness, the great favours of the Almighty, the extraordinary dignations and discoveries of

of *Christ*, and besides also, all temporal felicities ; how to proportion them to others benefit as well as our own, how so to regulate our judgments, counsels, expressions and affections, upon any such occasions, come they when they will upon us, that we may safely say with *St. Peter* here in any of them, *Master, it is good for us to be here, let us now build Tabernacles*, this condition is good we now are in, let us still be here, and yet not incur *St. Luke's* censure, that we know not what we say.

The Sum then both of the *Text* and *Sermon* will be but this ; *St. Peter's* and our common judgments, advice, affections and expressions in any kind of extraordinary content and happiness, spiritual or temporal, what they are ; usually they are we know not what ; and are therefore so branded here, by the *Evangelist*, that we may henceforth consider and know what judgments, counsels, affections and expressions pass from us in any such conditions, before we pass them. So that our work is to be this, to examine all these in *St. Peter's* speech, and shew you how far it may be said by any of us, and how it must not, and that in these Particulars :

1. How far his judgment may pass, that *good it is to be here*, how we may say, *It is good for us to be here*, think and say so, and how we may not.
2. How far his advice is good to build Tabernacles, how we may say, *Let us build three Tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias*, and how far it is not good to say so, wherein we may not say so.
3. How far his affections to his own, or his *Masters* ease and safety and present glory may be allow'd ; how we are to relish *Moses* and *Elias* their departing, or desire their staying, and how we may not ; as they departed, *Peter* said unto *Jesus* ; as if he would needs be staying them, that he might stay where now he was.
4. How far expressions sudden and unwary, such as for hast or passion and amazement, slip sometimes from us, as this did here from *St. Peter*, may be born with, how far we may be tolerated to say sometimes we know not what, and when we may not be allowed it, *Not &c.*

By this limiting and dividing the particulars of the speech and *Text*, and giving the several ways and senses it may be spoken in ; we shall neither wrong *St. Peter*, nor *St. Luke* ; but give both their due, *St. Peter's* saying, and *St. Luke's* censure : his saying, *Master it is good for us to be here, Let us build, &c.* and that *St. Peter's* speech was not altogether to be disapproved ; and that yet notwithstanding some fault there was in it, and that therefore *St. Luke's* censure just, and *St. Luke's* saying upon it, that *he knew not what he said*. Say with *St. Peter*, and say with *St. Luke* both, and yet say well with both, when we know what they both said, and in what sense to say it. *St. Peter's* authority will not in this point bear us out against *St. Luke's* ; but if we say it as *St. Peter* did, with all the circumstances, *St. Luke* will say of us what he said of him, that we know not what we say. But if we say the words as they may be said, he will not say so. Begin we then to sift the saying, and the first part first ; *Master, It is good for us to be here*. *St. Peter's* judgment of the condition he was in, and how we may judge and say so.

And it may be good to be so, and good to say so : good really in several senses ; a right judgment, and a right saying.

For first, This *here* was in the *Mount*, a place of solitude and retirement, a part by themselves, says *St. Mark ix. 2.* And 'tis good some-

times to retire our selves from the World and worldly business, to think and meditate upon Heaven, and heavenly things, especially having lately tasted of those dainties, that we may chew and relish them; nothing so good and convenient *then* presently as some retirement, to sit down a little and bethink our selves of the sweetness we have so lately tasted, the Covenant we have so lately renewed, the resolutions we have so lately taken up, and the ways to perform them.

2. It was a *high Mountain* too, says St. *Matthew*, xvii. 1. Nothing henceforth should serve our turn but high thoughts and resolutions; we must do nothing mean after so high favours and dignations; fix our thoughts, set our *affections* now henceforward *upon things above*, good to be here.

3. It was the *Holy Mountain* too, so styled ever since from the authority of St. *Peter*, 2 Epist. i. 18. And 'tis good to be holy, better then to be high. High contemplations of God and Heaven are not so good as holy conversations. 'Tis good indeed, very good to be also in the *holy Mount*, in holy places, at holy work, where *Christ* is to be seen or heard in beauty and glory, in the Church, at his Word and Sacraments.

4. For *into a Mountain to pray*, says our *Evangelist*, ver. 28. So, *To be here*, is, to be here praying; *Christ* went up to that purpose, as he tells us there, often went up to that purpose, as we find it, so it must needs be good; nothing does us so much good at heart as praying. It fills it with joy and gladness, fills our mouths with good things, fills our hands and our barns, and our coffers, all our filling comes from thus opening of our mouths. Be we in sickness, or be we in health; be we in prosperity, or be we in adversity; be we full, or be we empty, nothing does us so much good in any of those conditions as our prayers. Prayer, *Why?* in sickness it cheers us, in health it strengthens us, in prosperity it fastens us, in adversity it comforts us, in our fulness it keeps us from oppression, in emptiness from fainting, in all it does us some good or other. 'Tis good indeed to be here, that is, to be praying, especially to give our selves to it, to go aside on purpose for it, to ascend the Mountain in it, to go to it with raised thoughts, and elevated attentions; take *good* how you will, for *honest*, *profitable*, or *pleasant*, Prayer is all of them. To be with *Abraham* in the Mount, entitles us to be called with him for it, The friends of God, and there's *honestum*, *honest* even in the honourable sense. To be with *Moses* in the Mount is profitable against *Amalek*, to beat down our Enemies. To be here with St. *Peter* in the Mount, gives us the most pleasant prospect that mortal eyes ever beheld or saw, gives us a prospect of heavenly glory. *Bonum est esse hic*, 'tis every way good thus being here.

5. To be here is to be with *Christ*, and *Moses*, and *Elijah*, with the *Gospel*, *Law* and *Prophets* in our hands, reading and comparing them, meditating as well as praying. And 'tis good being so, good spending our time in such employments; *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think* (and ye think right too,) *to have eternal life*, St. *John* v. 39. *profitable they are*, says St. *Paul*, (and that is good) *for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 16, 17. thorowly good, that serves to make a man so thorowly good: good to be thus in the Mountain here, upon the tops of our houses, in our closets and highest rooms, where we have most leisure, less avocations, that we may the better attend so holy a work, especially since our late holy work, good to keep the scent and relish of those heavenly dainties in our souls.

6. *To be here*, is to be with *Christ*, and *Moses*, and *Elias*, St. *James*, and St.

St. *John* and St. *Peter*, to be in good company. Nothing better to make or keep us good. O *how good*, yea, and joyful or pleasant a thing it is to be together with such ! Nothing drives away sad and heavy thoughts like such good company, where the discourse is Heaven, where the entertainment is heavenly, where we eat and drink with *Christ*, where there is nothing but sweetness and meekness, and goodness to be learnt ; where there is nothing harsh or horrid, or unseemly ; where the news we talk of is what is done in Heaven, where our meat and drink is *to do the will of our Father which is in Heaven*, where our talk is not the vain talk of the new fashions of men and women of the World, but the fashions of *Angels* and *Saints*, and *Martyrs* of all ages ; where we talk not of other mens lives, but mend our own ; where our musick is the praises of our God, and our whole business Salvation ; where we shall hear no idle words, see no unseemly gestures, meet no distempers or distasts, but those things only which become law and order, *Prophets* and *Apostles*, or Scholars and Disciples of so good a Master ; Good it is to be here, to be with such.

7. But above all, 'Tis good being with *Christ*, St. *Paul* would fain be dissolv'd and gone to be with him, *Phil. i. 23.* would die when you would, to be with him. Far better, says he, it is ; far better then to be any where, or with any body else. Nothing comparable to it. Be it in life or death, Be it upon the Mount with him, (1.) In a place of safety. Tis, no doubt, good being there with him. Or, Be it with him (2.) talking with *Moses* and *Elias* about his Passion, about his decease, that he should accomplish at Jerusalem, as St. *Luke* relates him, ver. 31. in the saddest discourse of his sufferings, or the saddest sufferings themselves : 'Tis good being with him still. Or, Be it with him (3.) in shining and glistering garments in a condition of glory ; either when his face shines, the heavenly light of his countenance shines out upon us, when eternal Glory encompasses him and us ; or (4.) when only the fashion of his countenance is only altered towards us, when spiritual contentments flow upon us ; or (5.) when his rayments only are white and glister, when outward blessings glister about us, 'Tis at every turn good being with him. Yet more particularly.

'Tis good for us to be with *Christ* in safety and security, if we may so as St. *Peter* thought he now was here, that we may serve the Lord without distraction. Good to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, says St. *Paul*, 1 *Tim. ii. 2.*

'Tis good (2.) again for us to be with him also in his Passion ; to suffer with him ; good to be with *Moses* and *Elias* ever and anon, thinking and speaking of the Death and Passion of our Master, all his bitter sufferings, affronts, reproaches, whips and scourges, sweats and faintings, nails and thorns, and spear and scoffs, and tears and sighs, and exclamations, and giving up the ghost ; good to be made partakers too of his sufferings with him, to fill up what is behind of the afflictions of *Christ* in our flesh, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Col. i. 24.* It is good for me says Holy *David*, that I have been in trouble, *Psal. cxix. 71.* good above what *David* thought, to be with *Christ* in trouble, to be troubled for him, to suffer persecution for his Name. Blessed are they that do so, St. *Matth. v. 10.* and that's good, to be blessed ; and they that are not yet arriv'd to that, to suffer and be troubled for him, 'tis good they in the mean time be troubled with him, troubled that he should be so troubled and afflicted for them. 'Tis good to be with *Christ* in either of these conditions.

'Tis good (3.) to be with him in his glory, that to be sure needs no proving, the only good, the only true and perfect happiness to

see his face in glory ; all good is concentrated here, no good beyond it.

And yet (4.) 'Tis good too, to be with him so as to enjoy some glimmerings of that eternal light in the mean time whilst we are here, to enjoy the happiness of his gracious Presence in our souls, to have him shine comfortably into our hearts, *this is eternal life*, one ray of it, *to know Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*, St. John xvii. 3. to be sensible of those inexpressible comforts which he oftentimes vouchsafes to give us ; to be partakers of those sensible delights of piety which he sometimes allows us. 'Tis good, the sweetest good this life can yield us, to feel the sense and sweetness of his presence, and walk in it ; good to be in grace, and good sometimes to see the glory of this grace, to feel the joy and comfort of it ; so good to be here, that it is not good to be any where else, if we may be so.

Nay, and (5.) 'Tis good sometimes to have our Rayments white and glistering with him, to enjoy outward satisfaction and prosperities from him. They are not always the portion of the wicked. They are often happy instruments of grace and glory ; and when they are so, 'tis good to have them. 'Tis good so also to be here, to be under some of the fringes of these shining garments, when God pleases that we shall.

But last of all, 'Tis good to be here, be that here where it will, so it be where God would have us. 'Tis good to be here, because God would have us here. So this *here* is any where with God and Christ ; good for *David* to be in trouble ; good for *St. Paul* to be under the thorn and buffeted ; good for *Manasses* to be in fetters ; good for some to be in clouds and sorrows, as good as for others to be in safety and ease, plenty and prosperity, continual light or gladness. But above all in all these, *It is good to hold me fast by God*, says *David*, to cling close to *Christ*, good so to be here, to be, to hold so here, and every where, in all conditions, not to stir from him, to keep always by him, in his ways, under his protection. And yet as good as it is, and as we may say it is, we had best know what we say. For we must know sometimes for all this, It is not good to be here, nor good to say so. *Not knowing what he said*, says *St. Luke* of *St. Peter* for saying thus. Let's therefore now know why he said so ; when it is we say amiss, when we say, with *St. Peter*, even upon the Mount, in *Christ's* company, and the presence of his glory too, that *it is good to be here*.

1. We know not what we say when we say, 'Tis good to be here, that is, in the Mount only and no more, in honour and high places. They may prove the worst places we can be in. *Summos feriunt fulmina montes*, when the lightnings are flashing, and the thunders roaring, they are nearer the storm and danger than the low valleys.

2. Nay, even the *Mountain of righteousness*, high speculations are not always good to be in, we must be sometimes in the plains of action as well as in the Mount of contemplation. Nay, and even our own righteousness proves too often an offence ; when 'tis at the height, we are in continual fear of falling, fear of being proud of our graces and goodness ; as good as 'tis to be highly righteous 'tis not always safe ; 'tis good at least to come down a little out of the Mountain to humble our selves a little to the practice of ordinary and common virtue now and then, lest we grow proud of some extraordinary performances.

3. And more than so. 'Tis not good always, in all senses, that *Christ* be with us, or that we know it. *It is expedient for you*, says he himself, *that I go away*, St. John xvi. 7. and expedient is always good, and both it is that

that he should sometimes withdraw his Presence, the heavenly gifts and ravishments, lest we should grow proud, and slack, and negligent. 'Tis not good always to be here in perpetual and uninterrupted sensible heavenly comforts. 'Tis good that *Christ*, and *Moses*, and *Elias*, all should draw sometimes behind the cloud, good the sweetness of *Law*, and *Prophecs*, and *Gospel* too, should be curtain'd up from us for a while, that we might see our wants, encrease our longings, advance our endeavours, and grow more earnest to seek, more careful to pursue after them.

4. But 'tis not always good to be in continually bright shining garments, in the region of joy and glory, in daily and hourly happiness. It will make us forget *Christ* when we are just by him, and not know what we say though the eternal Word stand by us, scarce know how to look or speak. Such things too often do so.

5. But especially it is not good, because it is not fitting whilst others are all in sadness, others all in the Vale of tears, for us to be then in the Mount of joy, all afloat in mirth and pleasure. Fit it is, and therefore good, to have some fellow-feeling of *Josephs* Irons, of others miseries, infirmities, and calamities, not good to be here without such compassions.

6. 'Tis not good however to cry out *Bonum est*, though we be in such a condition, either of goodness or greatness, grace or happiness, above our fellows, 'tis not good to hug and please our selves in either of them, but especially not in temporal successes, no good crying it up, or our selves for it.

7. Not good, to be sure, to cry it up as the *only good*, to be in any worldly glory, or security. The *Transfiguration* will not always last. *Christ's* face will not always shine like the Sun upon us, nor his garments glister beyond what any Fuller of the earth can give them; he himself will back again ere long to lower ground, and have less splendid clothing. Yet should this continue, it were not yet the only good, that we should cry out nothing but *Bonum est esse hic*; this very being *here* is enough to allay the goodness, to tell you 'tis not all, nor will be so for ever.

'Tis good (1.) neither to be in honour, nor prosperity, nor alone, (2.) nor with others; neither in high contemplations, (3.) nor sensible consolations, neither in high mountains, (4.) nor high company, swallowed up in any of them, or so taken with any of them, to conceit any one of them is the only good, nothing good but that, no good being but being there. To say so of any of these, is meerly to say we know not what; an ignorant judgment and sentence upon it.

II. And secondly to advise to make *Tabernacles* for *Christ*, and *Moses*, and *Elias* here is to advise we know not what. Yet to give the great *Apostle* but his due, see we first in our propounded method how we may be allowed to say it or go about it.

1. 'Tis no ill advice to take or give, to raise us such *Tabernacles*, as our *Saviour* tells us, are to be rais'd with the *unrighteous Mammon*, *St. Luke xvi. 10.* *Habitations* or *Tabernacles* (for the word is the same, *always*, both here and there) that will not fail us when all others do; 'tis good making everlasting habitations, eternal *Tabernacles* vvith temporal goods, vvith good vvorks and Alms deeds, rearing *Tabernacles* by building *Alms-houses*, or endowing them.

2. 'Tis no ill counsel neither to make *Tabernacles* *here*, so they be but
Tabernacles,

Tabernacles, so we place not our minds and dwellings here, if we make them but *Tabernacles*, not houses, *Tabernacles* to lodge in for a night, or stay in for a shift by the way, have our *abiding City* some where else, have that above, look for that to come, if we only build us Inns or shelters as for strangers, make all our buildings, all our contrivements only to help and shelter us in our way. Then 'tis good.

Especially (3.) if we make them *here*, that is, upon the *Mount*, not in the low and dirty Valleys; If in the mids of all our projects, building and making fortunes, fortresses, and securities, we place them not in humane confidences, in worldly strength and riches, in that thick muddy soil, if our refuges be in the *Mount*, as near heaven as we can come, upon *Christ*, according to *Moses* and *Elias*, as the *Law* allows us, and the true *Prophets* teach us, we may make *Tabernacles* here, and do well in doing it.

If (4.) we build them here, here where there is such good company to live with, *Christ*, and *Moses*, and *Elias*, good Rulers, and good Priests and Prophets, good Government, and true Religion, upon such grounds we may have leave to fix our habitations, and desire to stay and dwell among them. So we pitch not our *Tabernacles* among the *Tents of Kedar*, nor chuse to dwell in *Mesech*, if we can keep out of the streets of *Gath* and *Askelon*, our stay a while upon earth may be desirable.

And (5.) *three Tabernacles* we may make also in particular: One for *Christ*, make all the provision we can for *Christ* to stay with us, use all the ways and means we can imagine to keep him among us, his Presence, his grace, his *Gospel*, his Sacraments, his Administrations, his Ministers, his Religion, his Worship still among us; Good advice it is, and a good thing it is to build *Tabernacles* and Houses, *Churches* and *Chappels*, that *Christ* and his may tarry with us.

Nay, and (6.) *one for Moses* too; some room we must make for Works as well as Faith; the obedience of Faith is the only faith of the *Gospel*, to live according to Gods Precepts and Commandments; this part of *Moses Law*, *Christ* came not to destroy, or dissolve, but to fulfil himself, and to give a new command and grace to us also to fulfil it.

So lastly, one for *Elias* too. The *Prophets* must not be shut out of doors, a *Chamber*, a *bed*, and a *Candlestick* for them as the noble woman of *Shunem* provided for *Elisba*, 2 *Kings* iv. 8. *that as they pass by they may enter in and bless us*. A place for the old *Prophets*, that we may confirm our faith out of their writings, a place for the *Prophets* of the *Gospel* that we may encrease it by their preachings; a place too in all our houses for *Elias* zeal for Gods Worship and Service, that that may be restored and advanced in all our families and dwellings, in all our habitations, a *Tabernacle* at least in our hearts for the zeal for Gods glory to reside in, provided that it be not so heady that it speak it knows not what.

Thus 'tis no ill but good counsel to say, *Let us build here three Tabernacles*, if (1.) they be only prepared for here, but raised in heaven, if (2.) they be only for Inns and shelters here, and not for mansion houses; if (3.) they be set upon high ground; if (4.) among good neighbours; if (5.) made for *Christ* and (6.) *Moses*, and (7.) *Elias*, for to keep *Christ* and his Religion, Faith, good Works, Zeal and Piety among us. Let us make such *Tabernacles* as fast and as much as we will or can, we need not fear St. *Lukes* censuring them for the sacrifices of fools, or the actions of men that know not what they do.

Yet now, secondly, there is a making *Tabernacles*, and a counselling
to

to do so that will deserve that censure, several such making *Tabernacles*.

1. When we would make the everlasting *Tabernacles* to be here, when we raise them no higher than *Mount Tabor*, seek heaven upon the earth, living as if there were no other World, building our hopes and fortunes here as if we were to continue here for ever, then we know not what we do.

2. When we will have nothing here but *Tabernacles* to shelter us, when we think much to descend out of the *Mount* to suffer with our *Saviour*, would not willingly part with any point of honour, safety, or advantage for him, would have *Christ* glorified before he is crucified, contrary to his Fathers Decree upon him and us, that we should both first suffer, and then enter into glory; when we thus shun the *Cross*, and will have nothing but the comfort; all for *Mount Tabor*, or *Mount Olivet*, peace, and quiet, and glory, and triumph, nothing for *Mount Calvary*, any kind of suffering; all for being clothed upon, not being uncloth'd or disrobed at all, *2 Cor. v. 2.* would avoid even death it self which we cannot avoid; when we can brook no Article of the Faith but the Ascension into glory, then *you know not what you ask*, as *Christ* said to the *Sons of Zebedee* at another time, you know not what you would have, ye know not what you say.

3. When we speak of making *Tabernacles* only for our own interests, that *we* may be in them, and consider not our brethren, when we will be engrossing *Christ* only to our selves shut all others out, or pass by them, or at least never think of them, or care what becomes of them, so we be safe, we then also speak we know not what. *Christ* came to redeem the World, and not that little pittance of it in the *Mount*, *Moses*, *Elias*, *St. Peter* and his two Fellows, not any only pittance in any *Mount*, a few particular elected mountaineers, and leave all the rest in *Adams* dirty mass. He was to be an universal *Saviour*, and pay a general ransom, to preach not only in the *Mountains* of *Judea*, but in the *Cabul*, the dirty Vale of *Galilee*, to be the God of the *Valleys* as well as of the *hills*, of those that sate in the vale of the shadow of death, *Gentiles* and sinners as well as those that dwelt in the hill Countries, in the Land of light, the *Jews*, and other righteous. *St. Peter* knew not what he said, nor know they that say thus after him, that would be keeping him always in the *Mount*, make *Tabernacles*, bars and fences to keep him from doing his Office to all the World besides. To talk of such *Tabernacles*, so cooping up *Christ* to our own Sect and Company, is to talk we know not what.

4. When we speak of making *Tabernacles* to retire our selves from doing our own Office too, from performing those duties we owe our brethren, which God has designed us to, and requires of us, we talk not wisely. *Quid dicis Sancte Petre* (says *St. Augustine*) *Mundus perit & tu secretum quaris?* What sayest thou blessed *Peter*? The world is ready to perish, and dost thou withdraw from helping to uphold it? Dost thou, that art to feed *Christ's* Sheep upon the Plains, and defend them from the Wolves, seek only to keep thy self secure in the *Mountains*? Nor Pastor nor People must so retreat into any *Tabernacles* to desert the charge that lies upon them of their brothers souls. Shall your brethren go to war, says *Moses* to the Children of *Gad* and *Reuben*, *Numb. xxxii. 6.* and shall ye sit here? No surely, we must down among them, and not think of *Tabernacles* for our selves till we have also made some for them. If our retirements hinder us not in our Christian duty we may retreat into our Tents; if they

they do, we say and do we know not what, to pitch upon any *Tabernacles*, Solitudes or Retreats.

5. If we think of making *Tabernacles* several for *Christ*, and *Moses*, and *Elias*, one for *Christ*, one for *Moses*, and another for *Elias*, think of severing the *Gospel*, *Law* and *Prophets*, 'tis we know not what, they all dwell in one together, all say the same thing, will not be severed. *Unum est tabernaculum Evangelii in quo lex & Prophetæ recapitulanda sunt*, says St. Hierom; There is but one *Tabernacle* for all those, all agree in one together, all preach *Jesus Christ* the *Saviour* of the *World*, though each in his proper way and fashion.

6. No talking of *three Tabernacles* at any hand. There is but *one Sheepfold*, and *one Shepherd*. *The Sheep that were led by the hands of Moses and Aaron*, *The Sheep that were seen in a Vision by Micaiah scattered upon the Mountains*; *The Sheep which the Prophets led, or fed, in any of their times, as Pastors sent by God*; *The Sheep and Lambs that St. Peter and all the Pastors of the Church are to feed from time to time*, are all to make up but *one fold under one Shepherd*, St. John x. 16. all to come into one *Catholick Church*, to be gathered all into one *Mountain*, into the same everlasting *Tabernacles* at the last. No *Tabernacle* against *Tabernacle*, no *Altar* against *Altar*, no *Church* against *Church*, no schism to be made in the *Mount of God*.

7. To place the beatifical Vision in *Christ's* corporal presence, or think that the blessed want *Tabernacles* and *Tents* to dwell in with St. Peter; or which is the same in fine, to place *Christ's Kingdom* upon earth, and dream of the *Millenaries* happiness, *Christ's reigning with his Saints* in all temporal pleasures and satisfactions upon the earth for a *thousand years*, is meer talking in our dreams. Let us make no such *Tabernacles* in our brains, they are meer *Castles in the Air*, rais'd in the *Mount* of our own fancies and vain imaginations; if we say so, we know not what we say.

No building our thoughts then upon worldly confidences, (2.) no making *Tabernacles* to shelter us from all storms, even from suffering for our *Master*, (3.) no building them only for our selves, (4.) No raising them to keep us from our *Christan* duty. (5.) No making them to separate between *Law* and *Gospel*, (6.) No making them to dividethe *Sheepfold* to set up *Schism* in the *Church of Christ*; (7.) No making them to anticipate heavenly happiness, to keep *Christ* upon the *Mountains of the Earth*, as if our business were wholly here, or wholly for our selves, or our affections carnal and earthly still. Let us make no such *Tabernacles*, preach no such fancies, believe no such imaginations, for if we do, St. Luke will tell us were we as good as St. Peter, we say and believe, and advise we know not what.

IV. Now that we may know whence it is that the same words have thus different senses, why they may be spoken well or ill, we are in the next place to examine the diverse affections with which they may or might be spoken. Either out of fear or out of joy; out of fear for his *Master* and himself, of future sufferings, which he heard them talking of, v. 31. and a desire to avoid them, or out of joy in the contemplation of his present enjoyment, and a desire to continue it.

Consider the words spoken, as proceeding out of fear of death and suffering, and a desire to avoid it, to disturb the method of Redemption by a new kind of *Propitius esto tibi*, a subtle new device to perswade *Christ* to favour himself and his followers, *Non ita fiet tibi*, to turn off the *Cross*, to keep with *Moses* and *Elias* in the *Mount*; or at least, if he

he would go down, keep them from departing, keep them however with him, *Moses* with his wonder-working Rod, *Elias* with his commanding Fire to defend him: Consider them thus, and he and his fellows may well be answer'd with a *nescitis cujus spiritus, Te know not what spirit ye are of*, What you are to look for in the service of your Master, *Christ Cross* the chief lesson they were to learn.

Consider them, secondly, as words issuing out of excess of delight and joy, either in the present glory as the *all* he wish'd for, in *Christ's* corporal presence as the *whole* he expected, in temporal felicities as the sum of his desires, or in sensible consolations as the only pieces of devotion; so also he is but *nesciens quid diceret*, he says he knows not what.

But consider them now again (1.) as arising out of a moderate delight in spiritual or temporal contentments, with St. *Mathew's* *Si vis*, submitting all to his will and pleasure, *It is good to be here, Master, if thou wilt, and let us make Tabernacles here; Master, if thou wilt, if thou think'st it good, if thou knowest it fit* (for so St. *Mathew* relates St. *Peter's* words, and) then they may pass without reproof, they are the words of knowledge of truth and soberness.

Or (2.) consider them as spoken in the very rapture of joy and high delight in the contemplation of heavenly glory, of Gods glory and his Masters, and great hopes of his own desiring what he can to promote and advance it, the words are the expressions of much love and piety, not the speech of a mad fellow, as *Jehu's* Captains styl'd the Prophet, he knows what he says, and what he desires; or, if through the excess of joy he said he knew not what, more then he could well express, there was no fault, but that which such heavenly joys necessarily cause in humane language by their inexpressible greatness, that if we say any thing, we must needs say more then we are able to express, they are so great that we know not what to say, and so St. *Mark* St. *Peter's* Disciple tells the story, Chap. ix. v. 6. *For he wist not what to say, for they were sore afraid, almost stupified and amazed.*

And if now, lastly, that be the passion too to be added to the other two, and St. *Mathew* says the same Chap. 17. 6. There will be at least an excuse for any indiscretion in St. *Peter's* speech; though withal a caution to us for ours, that we speak no more then we understand; that we meddle not to settle conditions, to pitch places, to erect buildings, to give counsels, or pass our judgments in things we have no knowledge of, lest St. *Luke* tell us we are to blame, we say we know not what.

IV. Yet now in the last place, we are to see how far sudden and hasty expressions may be born with, and when they may not without rebuke.

1. If they rise out of any sinful passion, sinful they are, and have no allowance.

2. If they rise out of any wilful heedlessness and indiscretion they are sins of indiscretion, and the words of folly, foolish words.

3. If they proceed out of natural infirmity and shortness of wit, they are at the best but to be excus'd; faulty they are, for why do they venture on what they do not understand.

But (4.) if they proceed meerly out of the excess of holy joy, or any passion unblameable, they are no sins, we may well bear with them, seeing we know not how to better them. There is a kind of spiritual and heavenly drunkenness, when raviht and over-gone with the sweetness of some

inward spiritual and heavenly joy, made drunk with the Spouses Flagons of Wine in the holy *Canticles*, with *the drink of thy pleasures*, says the *Psalmist*, *as out of the Rivers*, Psal. xxxvi. 8. over-bore with the strength of this celestial liquor, we say we know not what, do things beyond the ordinary course of action, seem mad though we be sober, as the *Prophets* did sometimes when the Spirit came upon them, lay down naked, use strange gesture, or speak words, with *Caiphas*, which at the time we understand not, run like mad-men with some *Martyrs* into flames and fires, to blocks and halters upon the sudden, powerful, and miraculous motion of Gods Spirit or Grace within us. These, for all that, not to be lookt for now.

Yet 'tis ever to be noted here, that how strange soever the expressions of some holy *Saints* have been in such excesses, though they have not understood themselves, yet others have; they never spoke *non-sense by the Spirit*, never blasphemy, never contradictions to holy *Scripture*, never any thing against Christian Patience and Obedience. We have heard of late of the *Pattern in the Mount*, a *Church* talked of to be form'd according to that *Pattern*. Indeed it seems to have somewhat of St. *Peter's Bonum est*, of his desire to be with *Christ* without the *Cross*, to build *Tabernacles* here for him, a new Kingdom upon earth, to set up *King Jesus*, a phrase much canted; but to this St. *Luke* gives his dash, 'Tis a *Nesciens quid diceret*, that neither he, nor they know what they say, what they would have. 'Tis meer fear of I know not what, a *fear where no fear is*, a meer stupor, as St. *Mark*, and a desiring what is not to be desired, an expectation of what is not to be expected, of nothing but ease and pleasure, and glory in *Christ's* service. Their present condition and successes make them say and wish they know not what.

For, if we truly examine it, we shall find this saying what comes next, we heed not what comes from present contentments and successes; when all things succeed to our mind, then we begin to forget our selves, or not to know our selves. Worldly felicities commonly so transport us, that we know not, care not what we say or do, our greatness we think shall bear us out. *We say in our hast* too with *David*, *we shall never be removed*, so care not what we say, how we behave ourselves to God and Man, only *Bonum est esse hic*, we set our selves to enjoy our pleasures, and build houses for them that shall come after.

Yet 'tis worth the noting, that whilst we are thus speaking, we speak often against our selves when we do not intend it. We call all our great buildings, all our great hopes but *Tabernacles* with St. *Peter*, so, as it were, presaging their remove, that they are of no long continuance and abiding. How many have we heard of in their times, who have by some sudden word, some unexpected expression been the presages of their own ruine, and by the slip of some unlucky syllable or two, doom'd the period, and fore-told the shortness of this *Mountain of Glory*? Of so unhappy speech are we, when we begin to talk of any glory or continuance upon the high places of the earth, we pitch a word instead of a *Tabernacle*, that takes away all our *bonum est esse hic* on a sudden, even whilst we mean no such matter, whilst we know not what we say. And as no holy company, *Moses*, nor *Elias*, nor *Christ's* own can keep us from all indiscretion in our speech no more then they did St. *Peter*, so neither do they keep us from undoing our selves often with our own language. We in a passion say we know not what, enough to throw down all our *Tabernacles*; remove all our *Bonum est*, all our goods. The more need then with the *Psalmist* of setting

ting a watch before our lips, and a guard before our mouths, that we offend not in our tongues; that we consider what we say before we say it, that we learn to speak before we speak it; that we keep our mouths even from good words, as the same holy Prophet has it; that we do not take up every word that seems good and godly, but weigh and ponder it in the ballance of the Sanctuary, by Christs Rule and Precept, before we utter it.

And so doing, and so speaking, we may in all conditions, high and low, in glory and ignominy, in prosperity and adversity, in all companies, in all places, say merrily and cheerfully, without danger, *Master it is good for us to be here and make Tabernacles here for Christ, and Moses, and Elias,* to keep them with us, we may build in the *Mountain*, or in the *Valley* without fear of this censure, not knowing what we do. All will be good unto us, all will work for good, if we temper our words and speak them soberly, and place them rightly, and direct them every one to his *hic & nunc*, to his proper object and circumstances; and *Christ* will tarry with us, and *Moses* not forsake us, and *Elias* not depart away out of the *Mountain* from us, till we come to the *everlasting Hills*, to *eternal Mansions*, *houses not made with hands eternal in the Heavens*, to dwell with *Christ*, and *Moses*, and *Elias*, and all the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, *see them face to face*, be transfigured and cloth'd in bright shining garments, and shine like Stars for ever and ever.

Uuuu2

THE

THE FIRST SERMON UPON All Saints.

PSALM. cxlix. 9.

* *This.*

—* *Such honour have all his Saints.*



O the *Text*; So the *day*; a *day* dedicated to God in honour of all *his Saints*. *Such honour* has God allowed them, *such honour* has the holy *Church* bestow'd upon them. Because they are *his*, and as *his* here they are had in honour, because *his holy ones*, *Sancti ejus*, as *his Saints* or holy ones honour'd with a *holy day*, or, if you will, God honoured in them on the *day*. For *this honour* also *have all the Saints*, that all the honour done to them, all the honour done by them, by the *Saints* in earth to the *Saints* in heaven, all the virtues of the one, all the praises of the other are to the honour and praise and glory of God in all the *Congregations of the Saints*, whether in heaven or earth.

'Tis not fit therefore any of *them* should be forgotten, from whose memories God receives so much; not reasonable to deny *them* any honour that so redounds to Gods. The *Psalm* gives them it, and the *Day* gives them it; God says they shall have this *honour*, and the *Church* this *day* pays it, and we must pay it, if we honour either him or her, *God* or the *Church*, or Father, or mother; pay it to them all, to all to whom 'tis due, all honour that is due. This is a *day* for us to meet all together to pay it in, for them altogether to receive it in. We cannot do it to all severally, they are too many, we may do it to all together. We profess a great *Article* of our faith, the *Communion of Saints*, by doing it; are therefore surely not too blame for doing it, having so good authority, so good a ground, so good a profession for it.

For say our new *Saints* what they will, unfaint they whom they please, dishonour they all the *old Saints* how they list, (1.) God has *his Saints*, says our *Text*, and ver. 5. *Saints in glory*, *Saints in their beds*, or in their graves; *his* they are, and *Saints* they are though there. *His Saints* (2.) have and shall have honour. A signal special honour (3.) it is they have; *This honour*, *such honour* as the former *verses* spake of. All of them (4.) have it.

All

All his Saints have it (5.) from him, are to have it from us, *gloria sit*, so some read, *Let this honour be given to all his Saints*, that's the last, and all five so many parts of the *Text*. I go on with them in their order.

I. God has his Saints. Saints in heaven, St. Mat. xxvii. 52. Saints upon earth, Psal. xvi. 3. Saints in glory, ver. 5. and Saints of grace. Saints at rest in their beds of honour, and Saints in the bustle of noise and trouble. The stranger men they, that engross the title to themselves, strike all the Saints out of the *Kalendar*, and will not call them so whom God has call'd so. Yet if to be Saints be to be holy, the title is their due that are in heaven, they are the holiest: If to be Saints be to be called effectually, they are called to purpose that are already there. If to be Saints be to be separate to God from the drossie multitude, they are of the highest separation. If to be Saints be to be established, if *Sancti* be *Sanciti*, there are none so sure, so established, as they who are in heavenly glory. And dare men be so bold to rob them of this honour so proper and peculiar to them, that 'tis but a kind of an impropriety to give it to any here below, which yet both *Scripture* and their own tongues give to some below, yet to none but such as are in *Communion* with those above, and as far only as they are in it. God has a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a separate or peculiar people, a people to shew forth his praise, called out of darkness into his marvelous light to do it, says St. Peter, 1 Pet. ii. 9. St. Paul, and the rest of the holy Epistlers, say as much, call Believers Saints ever and anon, and these have fellow-Citizens, Eph. ii. 19. Saints in an inheritance of glory, Eph. i. 18. worth the knowledge, says St. Paul, and now (2.) worthy honour too.

II. For his Saints have honour, are persons of honour. Kings and Priests, Rev. i. 6. Heirs of a Kingdom, St. Jam. ii. 5. Sons of God, St. John i. 12. Children of the most Highest, Psal. lxxxii. 6. So that if the Sons of Kings, or Kings themselves, if men in highest Office, or the nearest relation to the highest Princes be men of honour, the Saints are they, who are so honourably related to, and so highly employed by the King of Kings. Who are first honoured by him with such titles, as his friends, St. Joh. xv. 15. as his anointed, Psal. cv. 15. as his Sons and Daughters. Who (2.) are so his that he reckons what is done to them is done to him; receive them and receive him, despise them and despise him, St. Luke x. 16. the very least of them not excepted, St. Mat. xxv. 40. Who, lastly, are so entrusted by him that he admits them into his secrets, Psal. xxv. 13. makes them of his Privy Counsel, Prov. ii. 32. an honour without question, of the first and highest rank.

Enough however to teach us (1.) not to despise them whom God thus honours though they here walk in rags, and are fed with crumbs, and look desolate, and though they are covered with poverty, and encompassed with afflictions, and had in derision, and a Proverb of reproach whilst they are here, and when they depart hence seem to die, and their departure is taken for misery, they are honourable for all that, such as the Great King delights to honour, and must not be despised.

Sufficient (2.) it is to teach us not to dishonour our selves with any unworthy action or behaviour. 'Tis not for persons of honour to do things base and vile, indeed to live or act like men of ordinary and mean condition. Nor is it for any of them that are called to be Saints to employ themselves in the drudgeries and nastinesses of sins, in the low poor businesses of the earth, to work in Mines and Metals, or make that our business here.

For

For (3.) *this honour* is to teach us to do honourable things, higher thoughts, and higher works, to live like *Saints*, like such as are to inherit the earth, *Mat. v. 5.* to reign and rule in it, not to serve it, like such as are to inherit heaven too, and are therefore to have our conversation there, to do all things worthy of it, nothing but what becomes the Kingdom of *Christ*, especially seeing it is not only meer honour, ordinary honour but a signal special honour that is here given to the *Saints*. *Gloria hac est*, or *Gloria hic est omnibus sanctis ejus*; *This honour have all his Saints*, or *He is the honour of all his Saints*. What it is we shall best gather by the Context, out of the foregoing verses.

III. (1.) *The Lord taketh pleasure in his people*, ver. 4. There's the honour of a Favourite. (2.) *He will beautifie them with salvation*, in the same verse, there's the honour of his salvation, as *David* speaks in another place, there's a second honour. (3.) *Let the praises of God be in their mouth, and a two edged sword in their hands to be avenged of the heathen, &c.* ver. 6, 7. there's the honour of Conquerours, that's a third. (4.) *To execute upon them the judgment written*, ver. 9. There's the honour of judges, that's a fourth. (5.) Look back again, *Let the Saints be joyful in glory*, ver. 5. there's the honour of glory of eternal glory, that's a fifth. (6.) *Let them rejoyce in their beds*, or sing aloud upon their bed, there's the honour of eternal peace and security, or the security of their honour. (7.) Lastly, *Gloria hic est*, for the Pronoun is Masculine in the Hebrew. *He is the honour of his Saints*, God is their honour, so the Text may well be rendred, there's the infinity of their honour, *Honor infinitatis*, or *honor infinitus*, *their infinite honour*, that's the last. So here's the Saints honour, like Wisdom with her seven Pillars, strongly built, firmly seated, magnificently set forth upon them. They have the honour of being favourites, the honour of being ever and anon honourably saved and delivered, the honour of being Victors, the honour of being judges, a glorious, secure, infinite honour the *Saints* have.

1. *This honour* that they have is the honour of grand Favourites. *God is well pleased in them; taketh pleasure in the prosperity of his servants*; his delight is placed in them, *the Lords delight is in them that fear him*, *Psal. cxlvii. 11.* He deals with them as *Pharaoh* did with *Joseph*, *Gen. xli. 42.* Puts his Ring upon their hands, and espouses them to himself, makes them the keepers of his Signet, and grants Petitions by them; He arrays them (2.) in vestures of finelinnen, that is, *the righteousness of the Saints*, says *St. John*, *Rev. xix. 8.* cloths them with the best Robe too, the royal apparel of his Son. (3.) He puts a gold chain about their necks, obliges them with the richest blessings. (4.) he makes them to ride in his second Chariot, carries them in the clouds, and sets them all at his right hand. (5.) Cries before them bow the knee, *such honour have all his Saints*. (6.) He makes them Rulers over all the Land of *Egypt*, makes them to have dominion over the works of his hands, *Psal. viii. 6.* gives them all the blessings of the Land, gives them their hearts desire, and fulfils all their mind, all at their disposal. (7.) He does more than *Pharaoh*, he entertains them at his Table, feeds them with the bread of Heaven, embraces them in his arms, receives them into his bosom, counts them as the very apple of his eye, reckons them as his Jewels, compasses them continually with his loving kindness, prevents them always with the blessings of his goodness, *Psal. xxi. 3.* and crowns them with glory and worship, *Psal. viii. 5.* Puts Crowns upon their heads as well as Robes upon their backs; crowns them with this favour above the rest, as to unbosom himself unto them, to grant them secret conferences and discourses with him, as to his only favourites in the world. That

That this may appear the better, *their honour*, secondly, *is great in his salvation*; they do but cry to him and they are saved, they do but go to him and they are delivered, *Psal. xxxiv. 16. He preserveth the souls of his Saints*, says holy David, *Psal. xcvii. 10. He preserveth the ways of his Saints*, says Davids Son, *Prov. ii. 8.* Nay, says the Father again, he gives his very Angels charge over them, *Psal. xci. 11.* makes them tarry all about them, *Psal. xxxiv. 7.* that they hurt not so much as their feet, *Psal. xci. 12.* that they break not a bone, *Psal. xxxiv. 20.* that they lack nothing, *ver. 9.* This is an honour to some purpose, and a huge one for God to descend to do it for us; not like the honours of the earth, that lay us open to wind and weather, that cannot shelter us from danger and ruine, but raise us up commonly to throw us down with the greater violence. No, *he lifts up his meek ones to salvation*; lifts up his Son upon the Cross to save them, a high honour this; we would count it so if a King should venture himself to save us, an honour we knew not how to value, and such a one this is, you will see it clearly by the next, honour and salvation both exalted, which is the honour of Victors and Conquerours granted also to his *Saints*.

For (3.) though the heathen rage, the *Saints* shall be avenged, though the people imagine a vain thing against them, they shall rebuke them; if the Kings of the earth stand up, and the Rulers and Nobles take counsel together, the *Saints* shall bind them all in chains and links of Iron, all together; the gates of hell shall not prevail against his *Saints*; against his *Church* all the counsels and devices, all the strength and power, all the subtilty and malice of earth or hell shall do no good. Come life, come death, come Angels, come Principalities, come Powers, come things present, come things to come, come height, come depth, come any other creature; come tribulation, come distress, come persecution, come famine, come nakedness, come peril, come sword, come all the Kings and Princes of the earth, all the Heathen and Infidels under Heaven, all the violence and cunning of hell and all the Inhabitants of that dismal dwelling, come what can come, come how they can, come all that can, as good come nothing, nothing will come of it, of all their fury, in all these, says St. Paul, *we are more than conquerors*, Rom. viii. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39. *through him that loved us. Thanks be to God (says he) he always causes us to triumph in Christ*, 2 Cor. ii. 14. We may erect our Trophies, we may hang up our spoils, the spoils of these our enemies and dance about them, *praise his Name in the dance* as we are called to do, *ver. 3.* as certain of our victory *through Jesus Christ*, for through him *this honour have all his Saints*.

4. Yet not the honour only of the triumph, but of the judgment seat besides, to pass sentence and execute judgment upon the conquered enemies. *Know you not*, says St. Paul, *that the Saints shall judge the world*, 1 Cor. vi. 2. Are you ignorant of the honour God has promis'd them? *Know you not that we shall judge Angels too?* *ver. 3.* Much more then the Potentates of the earth, who have oppressed the *Church*, gain-said the Truth, stood up against *Christ*, and for a while trampled down the *Saints*. The time will be, the day will come when those great Princes, such as *Antiochus*, *Herod*, *Nero*, *Dioclesian*, and the rest of those persecuting *Furies* shall be brought before the great Tribunal, and receive *their Sentence from the mouths* of those poor *Saints* whom they so tyrannically raged against, to be bound hand and foot and cast into utter darkness. And how great an honour, think you, must this needs be to sit judges over those

those great men who made the earth tremble still before them, and even hell at their coming thither to be moved at them as the *Prophet* speaks, *Isa. xiv. 9.* How great an honour (I say) for such poor Scrubs as we, for the very poorest *Saints* to be made judges of such men? yea, and judges too not here, not in earth but below, but in heaven above; yet *such* also is the honour of the *Saints*.

And greater yet; for it is not *honor*, but *gloria* here; & *Sancti in gloria*, *ver. 5.* a glorious honour that the *Saints* are honoured with. All earthly honour reaches not to this title; glory that we may be joyful in is more than earth affords. The honours here are so full of fears, so farc'd with troubles, so stuff'd with cares; so amongst thorns and briars, so blasted with envies, so justled at by rivals, so assaulted by enemies, so undermin'd by neighbours, so suspected by friends that there is little true mirth or joy to be had in them, 'tis only the *honour of the Saints in glory* that is troubled with none of these, but surrounded with uninterrupted joys and songs of joy. And were the *Saints* lives here but so many days and years of affliction and vexation, ignominy and dishonour, this crown of honour at the last were a sufficient, abundant, superabundant recompence for them all. And this is so properly the *Saints*, that none else have the dream of a title to it; 'tis their inheritance, *Col. i. 12. Eph. i. 18.* 'tis their reward, *St. Luke vi. 23.* the reward of their Inheritance both together. The greater honour to be so honoured as to have glory it self call'd their reward, strange honour to them, to have honour entitled to them as their due.

But honour, joy, and glory given to them *in their beds*, to have joy and glory conferr'd upon them *in their beds*, to have it, as it were, with ease, with lying still, and to enjoy it with security, without fear of rousing from it, and in the very beds of dust, the dark Chambers of the grave, the Mansions of death it self to have this light and glory shine upon them, to have security and peace, ease and pleasure establisht on their glory, and those melancholy rooms that are hang'd with worms and rottenness enlightned with the beams of perpetual joy and comfort is a vast addition to their glory. Yet this they have, not only an immarcescible and incorruptible crown of glory, *1 Pet. v. 4.* laid up for them, *2 Tim. iv. 8.* but their very bones flourish out of the grave, *Ecc. xlvi. 12.* and even the lodgings of their very ashes seem to exult with a kind of joy to be made the receptacles and cabinets of those Jewels of the Almighty, and their Sepulchres and Memorials are blessed for evermore, *Ecc. xlix. 10.* The very places where they come are joyful at their shadows as they pass by, Miracles have been done by their shadows whilst they passed by, *Acts v. 15.* and when their bones have lain a while silent in the grave, the dead have yet been raised by them to life again, *2 Kings xiii. 21.* Thus his *Saints* have honour in life, and death, and after death, then when they seem to have been some while, nay, a long while raked up in dust and quite forgotten.

Nay, lastly, *Gloria hic est*, their honour is infinite too, 'tis a masculine glory. All other glories and honours are but Feminine, weak, poor things to it. God is their glory, honoured they are with his blessed Presence, honoured with his sight, with his embraces; they see him and enjoy him. This is the very glory of their honour, the height and pitch of all, for *in thy presence is joy, and at thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore*; honour advanced into eternal glory; And *this honour* also have all his *Saints*, some *in spe*, and some *in re*, some *in hope*, and some *in deed*; all

all either in promise or in possession. *All his Saints*, some way or other, more or less are partakers of it ; that's their honour at the full extent, an honour wherewith this day is great, which is a great considerable also in the *Text*; that *this honour* of the *Saints*, as special a one as it is, is yet also universal some way or other belonging to *all the Saints*.

IV. Some way or other I say ; for, this honour 'tis to be confest at first is not equal to them *all*. *One star differs from another star in glory*, 1 Cor.xv.41. One Saint differs from another in his honour. There is a Sun, and Moon, greater and lesser stars in the firmament of *Saints*. There are *Cœlestial* and *Terrestrial Saints*, *Saints* wholly busied in the work of heaven, and *Saints* who intermeddle also with the works of earth. *Contemplative Saints*, and *active Saints*. There were *Saints* before the Law, there were *Saints* under the Law, and *Saints* still after it. *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, *Martyrs* and *Apostles*, all were *Saints* ; *Jews*, and *Christians*, and *Gentiles* too have *Saints* among them.

And all have their honour. The *Jews* literally to the very words, the *Christians* mystically to the higher sense and meaning ; greater honour these, because more abundant grace than they. The *Gentiles* Profelytes they come in also for their share. Beloved and favoured by him all, delivered by him some way or other all, Conquerours, at least over their ghostly enemies, all of them ; to be judges all at last, and prepared to glory and honour, and Gods Presence after all. There are false *Saints* many, as there are false Gods many ; and false honour there is too, that is by some men given to both the false and true ones ; yet this no reason to scrape the true ones out of the *Kalendar*, nor deny the true honour that is due to them. If God say the *Saints have honour, est & erit*, for ~~est~~ the *Complutensian* Bibles read it, as others, ~~est~~, that *they have*, and *shall have*. I cannot but think that man too bold that dares contradict it, that dares annul the *Festival* or memorial of *All Saints*, of any *Saints* together or asunder, or rob them of the honour that God has given them. *Holy* they are, *Saints* is nothing else ; and the *Scripture* so often calls them *holy* that 'tis Infidelity to doubt it, Impudence to question it, and *Atheism* to deny it, and therefore *Sacrilege* it must needs be too to violate their honours, or plunder them of that which God has given them ; for *this honour*, says he here himself, or his Spirit for him, *have all his Saints*.

V. *Have* it from God first, are therefore (2.) to *have* it from us too. *Have* it from God, for he has promised it. *Those that honour me I will honour*, says he, 1 Sam.ii.30. and honour them he does ; (1.) He speaks of them with honour throughout the holy Page, and tells forth their praise, builds there, as it were, a lasting Monument to their memories. (2.) He gives them titles of honour, calls *Abraham* his Friend ; *Enoch*, in a manner, his Companion, one that continually walk'd with him ; *Job* his Servant with an *Emphasis*, with a *Quis similis in all the earth* ; *David* his dear heart, as one would say, *a man after his own heart* ; The true *Israelites*, the precious *Sons of Sion*, Lam.iv.2. and all his *Saints* his Jewels, Mal.iii.17. Jewels made up, and laid up in Cabinets, in the Cabinets of the highest Heaven. (3.) He gives them high and honourable employment ; to *Moses* to be faithful in all his house, his High Steward there ; to *Joshua*, and *Jephtha*, and *Gideon*, and *David* to be Generals of his Wars, and fight his Battels ; to *Solomon* to be his Master Builder, and the Overseer of his Works ; to all his *Saints* to be his Courtiers, and tread his Courts ; honourable all. Nay, (4.) he makes them all, as it were, Masters of his Requests, grants Petitions often upon their score. Thus for *Abraham*

my Servant, for the oath I sware unto *Isaac*, for my Servant *David's* sake, *1 Kings xv. 4.* at the Petition of my Servant *Job*, *Job xlii.* and the like, says God, I will do this or that. Many, many things God did for *Israel* for their sakes, many times withheld his Judgments, and bestow'd his Mercies for their only sakes; and with us he deals so too, grants us many favours and blessings for some of our holy fore-fathers sakes which he would not give us for our own. (5.) He so honours them that he seldom discovers any of their faults, or but easily glances at them, or but favourably speaks of them, as in that remarkable expression, *1 Kings xv. 5.* where he calls *David's* Murther and Adultery the matter only of *Uriah the Hittite*; yet recounting of their vertues he is alway full and large. Lastly, He sometimes honours them with miracles even at their Sepulchres, as he did *Elisba*, *2 Kings xiii. 21.* makes Napkins and Handkerchiefs from their bodies, *Acts xix. 12.* Nay, their very shadows, *Acts v. 15.* cure diseases, and (unless we will believe nothing but what we see done before us in our own days) many great miracles have been done at the Sepulchres of the *Martyrs*, God so honouring the memory of their faith and patience to the glory of *Christianity*, and the glorious propagation of it through the world; and there have been thousands of Witnesses to attest it.

And now if God so honour them, as if he delighted to honour them, it cannot seem strange if I now go on to tell you, we are to honour them too. It cannot be a sin in us to do that which God does before us, that we may do it the better.

I must confess there has been a fault, and still there is some in giving more honour to *Saints* and *Martyrs* than their due, not robbing *Peter*, as we say, to pay *Paul*, but robbing God to give to *St. Paul*, *St. Peter*, *St. Mary*, and other *Saints*. Yet there is a fault in others too, to rob the *Saints* under pretence to give to God. But is there not a mean between them? Sure, sure there is. We may give each their due, God his, and the *Saints* theirs, and all will be well.

For *Praise God in his Saints* (the beginning of the next *Psalms*, as we may read it, and some understand it, and may so without offence, it coming especially so close to this *honour of the Saints*) may seem to call upon us to give this honour to them. And *Psal. lxxviii. 35.* may be as well, *God is wonderful in his Saints*, as God is wonderful in his holy Places, for ought that I can guess by the Sense or Context, and a good reason to praise him for them, and in them too, as well as in his Sanctuary; we may praise him, I hope, for all the wonders that he does for the Children of men, be they in heaven above, or in the earth beneath. And, indeed, there is an honour due in both, *to the Saints that dwell on earth*, as it is *Psal. xvi. 3.* and *to the Saints that dwell in heaven*. Distinguish we but the honour as the *Scripture* does, and find out the several senses of it there, and we may know to give each their own. We shall begin below, see how we are to honour *the Saints that are in the earth*.

To honour is (1.) to esteem and value one; Good men are to be valued, be their condition never so mean or poor, that's one duty we owe the *Saints* whilst they live here; and there is good reason, for they are very Pillars of the earth, and bear it up, *Psal. lxxv. 3.* Ten righteous men, you know, would have saved even *Sodom* and its four neighbour Cities. 'Tis good we should prize them high that are more worth one of them than half a City.

To honour one (2.) is to perform the offices of Charity unto him, thus
we

we are bid to *honour all men*, 1 Pet. ii. 17. to go one before another in giving honour, Rom. xii. 10. especially then to do it to the household of faith, men of Piety and Religion.

3. To honour is not only to value, or to love, but to delight to be with, to seek their company; *Honorare timentes Dei*, Psal. xv. 4. to *make much of them that fear the Lord*, never to think our selves so well as in their company. *All my delight*, says the same Psalmist, *is upon the Saints that are in the earth, and upon such as excell in vertue*, Psal. xvi. 3. he was never pleased but when he was with them. Nay, even *Saul*, as bad as he was, yet *honour me*, says he, *I pray thee*, to *Samuel*, 1 Sam. xiv. 30. *before the Elders of my People, and turn again with me*; his company he must needs have, and an honour he acknowledges it to have the company of such a man, a holy Priest or Prophet. The world now is of another opinion, no company so contemptible; men are never well till such a one is gone; never merry till these holy men are out of doors, so far are men from thinking themselves honoured with their Society, or willing to honour them with theirs; any company rather than such as they; they make us melancholy, say they, they make us sad and dull; they trouble us with discourse we do not like, with God, and Heaven, and Vertue, and Religion, such hard businesses, and we know not what. But for all that 'tis a duty we owe both to our selves and them, to give them this honour, be they never so poor or despicable; and *David*, you hear, made it his delight, as well as *Saul* his honour, to receive this honour from, or give this honour to such men as they.

4. To honour is to maintain them too when they have need. *Honour Widows*, says St. Paul, 1 Tim. v. 3. that is, maintain them out of the Churches Stock; and they that labour in the Ministry are to be honoured *with double honour*, 1 Tim. v. 17. maintenance and respect out of the Churches Stock, and out of ours. Honour is thus taken too in the fifth Commandment, and we sin against the Commandment both of God and men, when we deny this honour where it is due, or whensoever the poor *Saints* stand in need of it. Thus you see what it is to honour, or how you are to honour the *Saints* below, to set a high value and esteem upon them, to perform all offices of Love and Charity unto them; to seek their company, and take pleasure to be in it, and as occasion serves, to express the honour and respect we bear them by some outward real Testimonies and Effects. We will see now how we are to honour the *Saints* above.

To Honour then, as it may relate to them, is to give them a respect above other men, to look upon them as the Courtiers of Heaven, as persons in highest place, as the Inhabitants of glory, as such as are always praying for us, Rev. vi. 9. such as are following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, Rev. vii. 14, 15. *Nebuchadnezzar* himself at the hearing of the interpretation of his Dream, could not refrain himself but he must even worship *Daniel* in whom he saw the wisdom of God so eminent, Dan. ii. 46. We cannot hold our selves sometimes but that we must needs express some especial respect or other to some who either amaze us with their stupendous abilities of nature, or works of grace. And is it only strange and irregular to give honour to those glorious *Saints* whose excellencies are so great, whose virtues have been so full of wonder? I cannot see why their memories may not live in honour, why being departed hence they should be forgotten, when their virtues and good works, as St. Paul says of *Abels* faith, Heb. xi. 4. though they be dead, yet speak unto us.

And if they yet speak, we may speak too, speak of them to their praise, for to honour them is to commend them : so God is said to be honoured, *Psal. xxii. 24.* So Christ to receive honour from his Father, *2 Pet. i. 17.* So men are said to be honoured, *Prov. xiii. 18.* and *xxvii. 18.* that is, praised or commended. To this purpose it is that the holy *Scripture* relates their Histories. To this intent *St. Paul* reckons up a whole Catalogue of them, *Heb. xi.* and would do more but that *the day would fail him.* After the same sort he honours *Lois* and *Eunice* the Grandmother and Mother of the blessed *Timothy*, *2 Tim. i. 5.* And an ancient custom it was among the *Saints* of God, it seems by the Son of *Syrach*, *Ecclus. xlv. 1.* to praise famous men, and the Fathers that begat us, to make a solemn commemoration of them. The *Primitive Church* was not behind in this duty neither, but in the Prayer for the holy *Catholick Church* recited the names of the most famous *Saints* and *Martyrs*, and gave God thanks for their good examples even at the *Altar* it self; nay, brought in the command of the *Apostle*, *1 Tim. ii. 1.* for intercessions and giving thanks for all men for the Preface of it, as a *Text* to authorize their so doing. Evidences these sufficient to honour the *Saints* with all our praises.

With our Praises, I say, but not our Prayers; our Praises of them, not our Prayers unto them; that's a piece of honour God has no where in Scripture any way allowed them. Prayers I find not that they are to have, Praises I find they may.

And which yet makes more to their honour than such Prayers could do, that they should be the Conduits of Gods honour to convey it to him; God is now (3.) to be praised for them. He praised in his *Saints*; he honoured in their honour; *honor servorum redundet ad Dominum*, so *St. Hierom.* God to have the honour of their honour; He who bestowed so excellent graces upon them, so excellent examples in them unto us, he to be blessed for them. Blessed too for the honour he has done to take them hence, out of this vale of misery to himself to glory and honour; this is to season the *Saints* honour right, to give it as we should when the Author of it is thus honoured by it.

But there is an honour still behind that makes up all. We are said to honour those whom we follow with our attendance. He that is highest in honour has the most followers, the greatest attendance. If we will therefore honour the *Saints* indeed, we must honour them by following their virtues and examples. This is that the *Church* principally intends by all the *Saints* it sets before us, by all its *Festivals* and *Holidays*, to put us in mind of the Patience of *St. Stephen*, of the Repentance of *St. Paul*, of the Faith of *St. Peter*, of the Purity of *St. John*, of the holy Chastity and Humility of the *Virgin Mary*, of the ready following of our Saviour in *St. Andrew*, of the leaving and forsaking all for Christ in *St. Matthew*, of a holy boldness to profess the truth in *St. John Baptist*, and so of the rest; and of the love, and charity, and communion the *Saints* ought to hold together in *this days Feast*; where they are all, as it were, joyn'd together, that we might learn never to make a separation from this communion, never to break off from the doctrine once delivered to the *Saints*, nor leave one single virtue unpractised which we find in any of them. This is truly honour to them to have a multitude of followers, the honour of all his *Saints*.

And it will be our honour too to follow them, and do like them; to make our selves honourable by these virtues, patience, obedience, chastity, holiness,

holiness, great piety, which have rendred them so renowned through the world; so famous in this, and so glorious in the other.

And all these together are all the honour, lastly, the *Saints* expect or require from us; besides that of our Prayers for their consummation, that they with us, and we with them, may in due time obtain the fulness of this honour, the completion of this glory at the *Resurrection of the Saints*.

By *this honour*, this reverent esteem of them, by this honourable mention of them, by the devout praises of God for them, by our diligent imitation of their vertues, and our Prayers for their perfection and consummation, and our own (for they without us shall not be made perfect) by thus giving honour where honour is due, as the Apostle speaks, we shall give God his honour, the *Church* her honour, our selves honour, and one day be made partakers of that honour and glory which *all his Saints* that are departed hence in his faith and fear enjoy already, and reign with him and them in honour and glory for evermore. *Amen.*

THE

THE SECOND SERMON UPON All Saints.

HE B. XII. I.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us.



1 Cor. 13.

Seeing we also? What, we also under the cloud? Indeed, our Fathers were, 1 Cor. x. 1. yea, and were baptized in the cloud. Christianity then in clouds, in shadows. But when the Sun displays his mid-day glories the clouds vanish out of sight, what then means this *Nubem tantam*? How comes this cloud? Is it because that Majesty is yet too glorious for our weak eyes to look upon without a veil? Is it still *videmus tanquam in speculo*? See we nothing here but through this watry glass? 'Tis so. *Viatores*, they, and we; and the Sun in a cloud fittest for travellers. Thus distinguished from the Saints in blifs, we for *nubem*, they for *lumen*, we compassed about with clouds, they with light.

And as *nubem* makes the difference between *Viator* and *Comprehensor*, so *circumpositam*, (for so is *συνεμειμανον*) between *Viatores Legis* and *Evangelii*, those Pilgrims of old, and our travellers. They were *sub*, the cloud above, they under it; so under it that they could not look up to the end of that which was to come. This *συνεμειμανον*, about us, we in it, and so see the easier through it. The Apostles by a figure first entring it at the *transfiguration*, when *Moses*, and *Elias*, Law and Prophets were departed, not before.

Yet should we grant them *circumpositam*, to be in it too, 'twould prove but *τὸν νεφέλῳ*, a little cloud to this *τοσούτων νεφδς*, or but a dark one to *νεφδς μαρτυρων*, a cloud of Martyrs whose flames out-shine the brightness of the Sun.

The truth is, our cloud and theirs are not alike. Ours but *Analogical* at the most. The Apostle had to speak to *Hebrews* to perswade them to the Race

Race of Christian faith, and to them he was to fit his speech. They would not so soon from their *beggarly rudiments*. A cloud they always had in all their journeys, and a cloud they would have *now*, or they would not stir a foot. St. Paul raises up a cloud in the preceding Chapter, yet a little to wean them from sense, though a cloud he calls it, it will prove no such cloud as their dull eye gaz'd after, but a cloud of Saints.

Indeed, need he had to tell them of a guide from heaven, that a few verses before had told them of so ill entertainment upon earth; stoning, sawing in sunder, desarts, dens, and caves, nothing but torment and affliction. *Ideo*que had been a poor inference, could expect but cold welcome without a *nubem tantam*.

And yet what avails a guide, though sent from heaven, if this same *onus* some weight about us overwhelm us, or the way be so bespread with *τὴν ἐνδεσσαν ἀναγρίαν*, such snares that every step we stumble and fall into inextricable dangers. Were it not for *ἀποδιανοί*, that he shews us how to quit our selves of all, the cloud might walk alone for all the *Hebrews*, *ἐν ἡμῖν*, and for all us too.

For as they, so we pretend often we would run but that we have no guide, here's a cloud to conduct us; then we have no company, here are *Saints* to go with us. No body to encourage us, here are *witnesses* to behold us. Then we are too pursie and unweildy for the course, why, off with that superfluous weight; yea, but the way is full beset with briers and thorns, down with them too; well, but the way is tedious, let's run with patience, no more than so; but we have nothing to run for, yes, there's something set before us that's worth the running for; we shall easily find that too in *Propositum*. So then here's

I. The Guide of our way, a *Cloud of witnesses*.

II. The Companions of our Course, a *Cloud of witnesses that compass us, habentes nobis, having it with us, or being compassed with it*.

III. The Spectators of our Course, a *Cloud of witnesses about us habentes circum positam*.

IV. The impediments of our speed, (1.) One that hinders us from setting forth, *Every weight*. (2.) The other that entangles us by the way, *The sin that doth so easily beset us*.

V. The removal of them both, *by laying aside or casting away*.

VI. The running of our course, *Let us run with patience*.

VII. The Race to be run. *The Race set*.

VIII. The crown of our labours, *Set before us*.

IX. The influence of the *Cloud* upon all, or the inference from it, *Ideo*que curramus. Seeing a cloud we have, and such an one, a cloud of witnesses, that will not lead us about as that cloud did *Israel* in the Wilderness, but *breve per exempla*, the shortest cut without staying now by the way at *lucens in infernum*, or *Sinus Abrahæ*, but hence immediately into *Canaan*, seeing the *Cloud* so great, the Guide so good, the Company so full, the Spectators of so high account, the Hinderances so easily put by, the Course so facile, the Race so short, the Prize so glorious, how can we but run like lightning after them? You see the parts.

'Tis fit the Guide should lead the way; the *Cloud* first.

I. The Cloud.

When time was, there was *Columna Nubis*; *Moses* his cloud, *Israel's* guide to *Canaan*. *Canaan* is gone, and *Nubem non habentes*, we have no such cloud, we.

There is another, *ut nubem iniquitates*, *Isaiah's* cloud, a thick cloud of *transgressions*, *Isa. 44. 22.*

transgressions, a winter cloud that sticks by us, a morning cloud that rises with us, at the first dawning of our days, and God make it too as a morning cloud to pass away. I would I could not say here *habentes nubem*, that we had not *this* neither, but this I can, *Ideoque habentes*, it is not no good conclusion thence, we have it not to follow, it sets in darkness.

What cloud then? Why, *Nubem testium*, St. Paul's new cloud, a cloud of witnesses, of holy Saints, who by the glory of example lead us more happily to heaven, than theirs did them to the *Land of Promise*. A cloud, for their multitude; but that we let alone till we come to *tantam*. A cloud, for the likeness of their Production, their Seat, their Nature, and Effects.

Their Production first. Clouds, though heavens near acquaintance now, are but refined earth, or water divested of its grosser body; and were not the departed Saints, a while since prisoners in these clay houses, now bereft of their happy tenants? One of the best of them, in his own esteem no better than dust and ashes.

2. Why, then, how got they up so high? The clouds they get not up themselves, 'tis the Sun that draws them upward. And *trahere me & curram post te* is the voice of the Spouse. Some celestial influence we must have, the best of us, something without us, from above to lift us up to heaven, nature cannot reach so high.

II. Like they are in their Seat and situation: (1.) Clouds are above the tops of the mountains; and the highest Pinacles of the earth are too low for an habitation for these sublime Spirits. Nor earth, nor all the mountains, the high places and preferments of the earth could content them, nothing under heaven, nothing but heaven. You know the desire, *Bring me into thy holy hill, into thy dwelling*.

2. But if we look upon the Saints of *Judah*, they were clouds indeed, and Types of *Christ*, who in them appear'd as the Sun under a cloud, the cloud between the eye and him. His birth in *Isaac*, his name in *Josuah*, his death in *Samson*, his reign in *Solomon*. *Omnia hac illis contigerunt in nube*, still a cloud between,

III. There is a third *Analogie* between their Natures and Effects:

1. Clouds they do not move themselves, 'Tis *Spiritus spirat*, the wind that drives them: And the Saints they do not move themselves neither, 'tis *Spiritus spirat*, the Holy Ghost.

2. But which is more to us. Clouds, they keep off the Sun from too much sweltring, too much parching us. This we get, at least, by the examples of the *Martyrs*, that however the heat of Persecutions and Afflictions scorch us, we are refresh'd in this, that no temptation takes us, but what is and has been incident to the most beloved Darlings of the Almighty. As comfortable this to an oppressed Soul as a cloud of rain in the time of drought, as a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest.

3. And as they comfort, so they teach us too. *The clouds drop down and distill upon man abundantly*, says *Elihu*, *Job xxxvi.28*. and the doctrines of holy lives drop as the rain, their speeches even yet distill as the dew, whose blessed Spirits now inhabit those everlasting hills.

To put all together. *Thither* they ascended up like clouds by the secret and spiritual operation of divine grace; *there* they dwell like clouds, their souls like the upper part of the cloud, light and glorious, though their bodies, like the lower, darkned in the grave. *There* they move like clouds in heavenly order. *Thence* they descend, like clouds, in the still
showers

showers of their happy examples, that in them, as in a glass, we may see the power of faith, the glory of their Lord, who has made earth ascend beyond its nature, and dwell above it.

And yet for all this, is it but *Nubem* still, a *Cloud*, not a *Star*? The Saints shall shine as stars, *Dan. xii. 3.* and methinks it being *Nubem Martyrum*, the *Martyrs* flames should rise better into stars than clouds. Should and shall in the Resurrection, till then *Nubem* still, some degree of darkness, at least a less degree of light. And whatsoever to themselves, for us perhaps 'tis necessary it be a cloud.

For had we not need of this dark word? When did not God on purpose cloud their glories from our eyes, were it not for this *nubem*, this cloud that covers them, man, as subject to superstition as prophaneſs, would quickly find out some excellencies for *δουλεία* and *κατάδουλεία* to fall down and worship.

Or if not necessary, yet more convenient far: For (1.) a *Star* would only guide us, a *Cloud* both guide and refresh us. Why not a Star.

And (2.) guide us better. For Stars only appear in the night. Clouds night and day we can see them, so best follow them. The Sun-beams put out star-light. Prosperity cannot see a Star, so small a glimmering ray. A Cloud, come it night or day, in prosperity, or adversity, we perceive that presently; so a cloud to teach us in all estates how to demean our selves like devotion in its ancient innocence. *Abrahams* cloud, when the days are calm and clear. *Jobs*, when the day is swallowed up in a tempestuous night. So never destitute of a cloud.

3. Clouds, not Stars: They are none but the *Magi*, wise learned men can follow the Stars and their courses, but every Peasant sees which way the Clouds move. So if Stars, they had been for none but wise learned men to follow, now the poor Country man has a cloud to run by.

And yet how easily soever we perceive the track of the Clouds, yet if there be a scatter'd multitude, we are as easily distracted. 'Twere best to have but *Nubem* in the singular, but *one cloud*, 'tis so. Many drops, but one cloud, though the materials fetcht from several quarters. The *Martyrs* all *one Cloud* to shew their unity, all and each confessing, witnessing one and the same truth, for truth is but one. So not St. *Judes* clouds, they not only empty, no *stillicidium* Doctrine in them, no good to be learnt from them, but clouds too in the Plural, some moving this way, some that way, no constant course; in division too, one coursing against the other, at such enmity is evil with it self. 'Tis only good, and good men that keep together in *nubem*, in peace and unity, and by that you shall know them. Why Nubem in the Singular.

Be it a *Cloud*, and but *one Cloud*, the more probable still too small it may be to command the eye, and then what are we the nearer? *Nubem*, not *Nubeculam*, no diminutive; will that do it? If that will not, *tantam* will. So great a cloud. Why, how great? So great that St. *Paul*, ver. 32. of the former Chapter, tells them, the day would fail him to shew them it all, as if so great a cloud could not but shut up the day in darkness. Nubem not Nubeculam.

Our first *Fathers* of the World had no cloud to guide them, nothing but natures dusky twilight. This cloud began to rise in the time of the *Patriarchs*, but to appear in the time of *Moses* like *Eliahs* cloud at the red Sea, went before him thence into *Canaan*, covered the whole Land of *Judea* in the time of the *Prophets*. So these *Hebrews* had cloud enough; yea, but *ἡμεῖς*, we have more. Tantum.

Y y

Even

Even those *Hebrews*, to whom this *Epistle* was sent, they are in the Cloud. About that time this cloud, rising in the *East*, spread its wings presently into the *West*, and had almost in an instant fill'd up the corners of the World; so that if you now ask again, how great, so great I cannot tell you.

Μαγνὴν.

Primitive Christians they in the number, you will not wonder at *μαγνὴν*, if it become a cloud of *Martyrs*. Indeed the *Law* of *Moses* had its *Martyrs* too: Witness *Isaiah's* Saw, the *three Children's* fiery Furnace, the emptied skins of the tortur'd *Maccabees*. But since the time of *Christ* his servants have engrossed the name (as if they only were the *Martyrs*) and filled up *tantam* to the brim; Their multitudes tiring the wit of cruelty, and their patience overcoming it: as if from the streams and rivers of their blood heaven might now enskarfe it self in a scarlet cloud.

Nubem Martyrum.

Well, talk we may of *Martyrum* what we will, yet if *Nubem* be not first, they will be but *Stulta Philosophia*, all this while, no better. 'Tis the order in the *Text*, *Nubem* first, then *Martyrum*. First, clouds lifted up to heaven in their thoughts and conversations, and all in *one*, the Sons of peace and unity, if you can see *Christ* in the cloud, then *Martyrs* if you will. Schism, and faction, or discontented passion yield no *Martyrs*. You shall know a *Martyr* by *Nubem* if *that* go first.

Testium.

How Testium.

But taking *Martyrs* thus, all are not *Martyrs*. All died not for their faith, but all are *Testes*, *Witnesses*. *Witnesses* of the Power, *Witnesses* of the Mercy, *Witnesses* of the Justice of God. Of his *Power* in delivering them from sin, of his *Mercy* in saving them from punishment, of his *Justice* in rewarding them with glory.

Why Testium.

Witnesses to this *curramus*, (1.) to witness the possibility that this *Race* we are to speak of by and by may be run, this *Propositum*, the prize won, for, *ab esse ad posse*, run the one they have, and won the other long ago. (2.) To testify the easiness, that even the weaker Sex, *Sarah* and *Rahab*, the weakest age, the *three Children*, the army of *Innocents* have run it. (3.) To testify the dignity, that both *King*, and *Priest*, and *Prophet*, *David*, and *Samuel*, and *Daniel* thought it worth the pains. (4.) To testify the universal necessity, all ages, young and old; all Sexes, men and women; all degrees, high and low, to run this race, none excused.

What required to Testium.

And that you may not mistrust their testimony, what is required to the best witness you have in them. (1.) That he knows what he speaks, and what knowledge like theirs that speak by experience, that now feel the reward of truth. (2.) That he will and dare speak it, and these have fear'd no torments for it, they are *Martyrs* of it. (3.) *Witnesses* should be men of rank and quality, their worth has plac'd them above the clouds. (4.) They are authentic, *habentes circumpositam*, the Spirit has set them round about us to that intent, and he is the Spirit of Truth. So far now from doubting of our guide, that we wave *Nubem* and pass to *habentes* the second relation they have to us, not only to direct us, but to bear us company.

Habentes our Company.
Habentes nobis.

And indeed, what is *Nubem*, and *Nubem tantam*, and *Nubem Martyrum*, and *Nubem testium* to us without *Habentes*, except it be ours, yea, and *habentes nobis* if we have it not along with us. What are the glorious Angels themselves to us but flames and two-edged Swords without this *Habentes*, if we have them not for *ministring Spirits*? What are the Triumphant Saints to us, however dazled with their own glories, without

Habentes

Habentes, if they be none of ours, if they be not members of the same Church, of the same Religion with us? Cast off your Religion quite if you can claim no portion in the Saints, if you have no *Mar-tyrs*.

What is it then that some so often ask what have we to do with Saints? *Nubem imposi-*
'Tis well besides the *Habentes* that we have an *Impositam* from the Vulgar *tam*.
Latine, that it is imposed upon us, some necessity of it sure; and that
we have a *Circumpositam* from the Greek *περικείμενον*, that not only we have *Circumpositam*
this Cloud, but that we have it put about us, not of our own putting on. *habentes*.
Habentes it might be, we might have it of our own chusing or fancying
(we know who have so, Clouds of their own making, Saints of their
own canonizing) but *impositam* or *circumpositam* it cannot be except some
body put it on us, and who is it that makes the clouds a garment for
this earth, but he that makes the Clouds his Chariot? Who can dispose
of the Saints, but the King of Saints? So then a sufficient excuse we
have for *Habentes*, God it is that compasses us with this Cloud of
witnesses.

And if they compass us, they will be near about us by and by, that they *The Spectators*.
may behold our doings, to be spectators of our course, and witnesses to
that too, to rejoyce at our speed, to congratulate our success, to receive us
with the triumphs of glory.

And yet methinks the *Apostle* mentions Saints that are gone before,
how come they now to be round about us? *Angels* indeed are *ministering*
Spirits perhaps some of them may pitcht about us. *Angelus Domini in*
circuitu timentium, *Psal. xxxiv. 8.* The *Angel of the Lord tarrieth round about*
them that fear him, but how can the Saints be said to compass us
about?

May it not be a *Metaphor* to shew their multitude, because there are so
many, that we cannot turn our eyes any where about us but we see them?
The Phrase is *Dauids* in another case, *The sorrows of death compassed me*,
Psal. xviii. 4. at every hand, on every side, at every turn. I cannot avoid
them.

Or is it, that they guard us round with their *Quousque Domine quousque?*
their earnest prayers for their afflicted Brethren?

Or is it that being *there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth*,
St. Luk. xv. and they with the *Angels* make up the Choir, and heaven it
self encompasses us, they therefore are said to compass us?

Or is it that their Graves and Sepulchres are round about us, and we
as it were still encompassed with their bodies, and they as it were did
still encompass us in their bodies? The word may seem on purpose as it
were. *Κεῖται* is *jaceo*, and *περικείμενον* is *circumjacentem*, lying round about us. The
Sepulchres of the Saints do so this day. As if *St. Paul* had meant, that
from the sight and nearness of the resting places of their sacred ashes we
should every day be put in mind with thankfulness to acknowledge
the riches of Gods goodness in our deceased brethren, and learn
those vertues whereby their bones now flourish out of their Graves,
and their memorials live for evermore. Least, as *Abels* blood from the
earth, so their dust from their silent dormitories should cry out against
us.

Not *Suppositam* now, no supposed cloud, 'tis true, 'tis real, if it encom- *Not Suppositam*.
passe us. Such Saints there are without a supposition, they die not *all* when
they go hence, something there is still to make the God of *Abraham* the
God of the living.

Not Superpositam.

Περίεχουσιν it is, and *circumpositam* it should be, not *sub*, nor *super*, not *superpositam*, not set over us *they* as Lords and Masters of our faith, to make what Articles they list, but *circum*, about us, as fellow witnesses and Companions.

Not Præpositam

One more, not *Præpositam*, not set before us to run to either for mediation or intercession. He that regards the clouds *thus* shall not reap, no thanks I am sure. *The Prayer of the humble pierceth the clouds*, Eccclus. xxxv. 17. flies higher. 'Tis the Prayer of the self conceited, however it seem a voluntary dejection and humility, that is stifled in the middle Region, and if you mark it there's no *Aspicientes* here; no looking of up to them, *habentes* is all that's here, *aspicientes* is kept till the next verse for *I E S U M*. For if this cloud dim our eye sight, and we instead of being compassed about with them, compass them about by *Pilgrimages*, *Adoration*, or *Invocation*, our best way is to the next words *Deponentes pondus*, to cast off that heavy mist that fits upon our eye lids, or to the next verse, Ἀφ' ὧν τὴν εἰς ἡμᾶς, turn our eyes from them, and look to *I E S U S* the Author and finisher of our faith.

Application.

I hope by this time we know what to do with *Nubem*, what use to make of this *Cloud of Martyrs*, for *habentes* it is, and we have it not for nothing.

Habentes.

Are they *Clouds*, why *habentes* first. Let's have them in account for such, for something more than earth. *Habentes in honore*, let us think and speak reverently of those happy spirits, have their vertues in remembrance, their remembrances in honour, them in our thanksgivings, their monuments and ashes in so much respect; to keep them from the prophane scattering hand, to put us in mind of their exemplary Piety and a Resurrection.

Habentes nobis.

Habentes nobis next, to have them to our selves, to apply them home for imitation, to ascend up in our thoughts like clouds to heaven, in our affections to inhabit there, to live and move there in all our actions, that *Christ* may be seen in all our doings. To learn from *habentes nubem* good company, from *Nubem* something heavenly, from *Nubem* in the Singular, peace and unity; to learn the degree from *Tantum*, from *Testium* the open profession of our faith, and from μαρτύρων courage and constancy.

Habentes circumpositam.

To do all this *habentes circumpositam* is the way, to place them round about our thoughts, to fix our eyes upon their piety and reward. You know what the imagining a *Heathen Cato* present has done with some, to fright them into honesty, and shall not the presence of those blessed Souls shame our dulness into Piety, if we would but suppose those stupendous patterns of unconquerable goodness, always chearfully busied in beholding us, encouraging us, and rejoicing with us?

Impediments of running.

But we must not stand too long gazing into heaven. There are blocks and traps in the way, and we may chance to stumble, we must look about us. There are two impediments sufficient to hinder any man from running, when he cannot go for weight, nor go on for snares. We'll handle each with his removal, *first* apart, *then* together, and begin with the weight.

1 Pondus.

And yet peradventure *Pondus* were little, were it not for *Omne*, were it not a collective, a collection of all, of infinite weights. Infinite in weight, infinite in number, above the Sand of the Sea, and that you know can be nothing else but Sin.

1 Quid Picca-
tum.

Sin, *Sedet in talentum plumbi*, Zech. v. As heavy as lead. A weight
right,

right, for it (1.) burthens as a weight. How does the repentant soul ^{2 Quare pondus} groan and break, *Conteritur*, is ground to ponder under it! (2.) It wears as a weight. How tired is St. Paul with it! Who, *O who shall deliver me from this body of death!* Rom. vii. (3.) It presseth down as a weight, down from the joys of heaven, down from the throne of grace, down to the Chambers of the grave, down to the bar of judgment, down to the depth of hell. David found it by his deliverance. *Thou hast delivered my soul from the nethermost hell.*

Every Sin is a weight, but there are some heavier than other. Some ^{3 Quotuplex.} (1.) *Gravamina Spiritus*, weights with a powder, such as even weary the holy Spirit, and grieve it, and make him leave his dwelling with us. *Mortal sins.* (2.) Some heavier yet, that so oppress our own spirits too, that with a sad heavy eye they cannot see any thing but those dismal dungeons, Hell and Desperation. Sins of Despair. (3.) Some on the other side, that look too high, *weigh up, ut lapsu graviore*, to fetch down with a vengeance. Sins of Pride and Presumption, 'tis one signification of *ὄγκος*, a weight that hoisting up the rebel *Angels* above their pitch, as speedily pull'd them down from the highest Palaces of their new created glories to the lowest Prisons of damnation. (4.) And yet some sins there are of a lesser bulk, such as some call *venial*, yet heavy enough to lay us low enough. Sins of infirmity and ignorance. Dispose they do at least to the more grievous, *Peccatum quod mox per penitentiam non deletur suo pondere ad aliud trahit.* St. Gregory. The least, the pettiest sin, if it remain a while unrepented of is a weight to draw us to another, that to a third, so downward till we can go no lower.

And think you now we had not need of an *ἀποβολή* to remove it? Can ^{The removal.} we know it to be a weight, and not deal with it as with a weight? Either cast it away, *Abjecto pondere*, Beza translatest, or lay it aside, *Deponentes*. So the *Vulgar*.

Cast it away, nay, first cast it out, for 'tis a weight within us. Out of ^{Both together.} the heart, (1.) By the mouth in confession; (2.) By the eyes in the tears of contrition; (3.) *ἀπὸ* from us, far from us by the hand of satisfaction.

Abjecto, there's some violence and passion in the word. We use not to ^{*Abjecto pondere?*} cast away things from us but out of some sudden (1.) Fear, (2.) Shame, (3.) Anger, (4.) Joy, or the like. They are the Passions that enliven a repentance. (1.) Fear of judgment, (2.) Shame of sin, (3.) Anger at our selves, (4.) Joy and delight in God and goodness. (1.) The tremblings of Fear (to begin with) will shake sin off; (2.) Shame lay it down; (3.) Anger cast it from us; (4.) Joy and Love, the love of God, put it quite out, lay it aside out of the way, for if that holy fire once enter, the house will be too hot for sin to dwell in.

But violent motions are but short, and passions momentary. *Abjecto* ^{*Deponentes pondus.*} does well at first, but it must be backt with a *Deponentes*, a resolv'd and deliberate laying down of sin. 'Tis to be feared *Abjecto* cannot do't alone, sin has too deep a root to be cast off utterly on a sudden. That's *Deponente's* office to lay it down, down by degrees. First those *Gravamina Spiritus*, then that *ὄγκος*, that pride in sin, or as the word may bear it, that domination of it, lay it aside as a tiresome burthen, grow weary of it, (2.) Or as we do our cloaths when we go to bed, not sleep in it. (3.) At least the weight of sin, that is the guilt of sin by confession and absolution, the spots and habits by contrary resolutions and endeavours, the great weights, the little ones, all. *Omne Pondus*, every one, *omne & pondus*, both in

in the singular, to tell us *every weight* to be cast off, not one single weight to be left hanging on.

2. *Pondus Divitiarum.*

No not the *weight* that is no sin, not that, for such an one there is. *Pondus terrenarum possessionum*, says St. Bernard. What say you by riches? *Pluto*, the God of riches, feign the *Poets*, dwell's below; Hell's his kingdom. And riches from the caverns of the earth they come, and, like waters to the Sea, thither they naturally return, down they carry us. Not but that if you look up your eyes may behold a rich *Abraham* above in heaven. Riches are as they meet with Owners. The pious hand makes himself wings of these golden feathers to fly to heaven, the wings of the *Psalmists Dove*, that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold. And if I must needs have riches, *Quis mihi dabit pennas columba?* O that they may prove the wings of this Dove, that I may flee away and be at rest! The churlish fingers frame themselves fetters, to chain them faster to the lowest Pit. Indeed, nothing more knits us to the earth than our wealth, we are loth to use it in our life, loth to leave it at our death, though for a Kingdom. Sell all, you know he startled at it, that thought he had kept all the Commandments from his youth.

Abjeto mihi.
The first remove.

I love not impossible tasks to perswade any amongst us now adays to that; yet *Emperours*, and *Kings*, and *Saints* have done it, and *Qui capere potest*, &c. for I would not have you think but honourably of those magnanimous *Heroes*, such as we read of, *Acts iv.* those prime constant heirs of grace and glory.

Abjeto pondere

'Tis but a counsel *this*, and counsels it seems are out of date. Well, all of us to cast off riches, when they come to *Pondus*, no necessity till then, keep them you may till *Pondus* come. *ἔρχοι* first, then *ἀποδείξω*, that's the order, then 'tis a Precept. If the weight be ready to hurry you headlong into sin, then off with them. Better lose *ἔρχοι πάντα*, them all, every farthing, the world and all, than your souls.

Abjeto pondere divitiarum.

Or yet better that they come not thither so far; cast off the weight of riches, that is, the superfluity of them, cast that away upon the poor. Cast away said I? Pardon me; *Deponentes*, lay it down, lay it aside for them, or *Recondentes*, *Reponentes*, 'tis no straining of *ἀποδείξω*) lay it up in the bosoms of the poor, lay it down at the feet of Christ, lay it out upon God, lay it up in heaven.

Deposito Reponito.

3. *Depositis honoribus.*

And say we not as much for honour too? *ἔρχοι* is a word peculiar for Majesty and honour. Lay them down too, in *Deponite*, there's a *De*, that's down; lay them down upon the ground, descend even thither by humility, if your honours puff you up, overpoise you. Sins, Riches, Honours, every weight, away with all.

Omit pondere non onere.

And though every weight, not every burthen yet. Bear you one anothers burthens, says St. Paul, and Christs burthen is no weight. *Leve Meum*, that's light and easie, and tollite meum, take up that. Besides, every thing in this world is a burthen, this body we carry about us, *Corpus mortale degravat*, we are a burthen to our selves; our necessities, our pleasures, our meat, our apparel, our life are burthens, and all we cannot cast away, he must go out of the world that can do that. But take heed they come not, any of them, to *ἔρχοι*, *Pondus*, if they do *πάντα ἀποδείξω*, every weight, be it what it will, that keeps our spirits from rising to those eternal dwellings, pleasures, profits, preferments, cares, desires, off with all if they begin to sollicite us to sin.

II. *Impediment Peccatum circumstant.*

Before I was aware I have told you what is *peccatum circumstant* too, what is this *Sin* that does so easily beset us, the occasions and temptations to sin.

fin. So the golden Calf is called *peccatum vestrum*, Deut. ix. 21. The *Israelites* fin, that is the occasion of it. So St. Paul, Rom. vii. *Is the Law sin?* That is, the occasion or cause of fin. So here by *peccatum circumstans*, the *fin* that does so easily beset us, I see not to the contrary but may well be understood all things about us whose only presence become temptations, which are *Tentationes obiective*, or *materialiter*, the objects of temptation, and of these already. Or, more properly, the temptations themselves, which rising from those things about us do besiege the soul, and are *formaliter Tentationes*, formally temptations. And if you please to mark either the mutual opposition, or the correspondence of the words, 'twill be no great mistake however to think *this* sense most native and genuine.

There's a double cloud in the Text, St. Pauls and *Isaiahs*, his of *Saints*, *this* of *sins*, the one opposite to the other. *Ἐνσείσατον ἀμαρτίαν* το νῆρος *σείσιμνον*, in opposition right; and a cloud of temptations that are *without* us, *συστοιχὴν τοο*, in the *Apostles* Phrase, fitly answering to the cloud of *Witnesses* about us. Opposed (1.) in *pondus* that's heavy, to *nubem* for its lightness. (2.) In *Peccatum*, *Sin*, that's black and ugly, to *Testium*, *Saints* beautiful and glorious. (3.) In *habentes*, that to *deponentes*, the one to be put on, the other put away. And that it might be fitly opposed, fitly answering it is in *omne* to *tantam* for the quantity, in *circumstans* to *circumpositam*, *circum* and *circum*, *extrinsecum extrinseco* for the same external relation that is in both alike.

Only with a double difference. *Circumpositam* passive, that belongs to *Nubem*; *circumstans* active, that to *peccatum*. God puts the one about us, not the other. Not the sin, nor the temptation. *Nemo dicat. God tempts not any man.* *Habentes* indeed properly the one, the sin we have of our own; and *circumstans* the temptation, that rises of it self and besets us round, but no *circumpositam* to either, God no Author of the one or the other.

There's a second. In *ἐνσείσατον* there's *ἐν*, that's *facile*, to shew how ready the temptation is to entangle us. We had a cloud of *Saints*, and *that* had a *νῆς* but no *ἐν*, no *facile* there. Sin and its occasions are a great deal more welcome to us, do more easily wind about us, and work upon us, than any examples of the Saints can do.

I know there are, that would have *ἐνσείσατον ἀμαρτίαν* be understood that fruitful soil of sin within us, our innate corruptions and propensions. But *νῆς* here, *circum* is *without*, that *within* us. *Ἡ οὐκ ἔστι ἐν ἡμῶν ἀμαρτία*, *Sin* that *that dwells in us*, says St. Paul, Rom. vii. 17. not that dwells about us as temptations do; *ἐν ἡμῶν* not *νῆς ἡμῶν*. and then *ἀποδείμνιστοι* must be no Participle for *τῶν ἀμαρτίαν*; *Deponentes concupiscentiam*? It cannot be, we are not commanded impossibilities. I would it came within a Precept. The sin that came with it into the world is gone in *Baptism*, we have washt off *that*, concupiscence stays *still*, wash off that we could not, and yet we cannot lay it away. The *thoughts* that thence arise, arise they will, we cannot hinder, the *sins* we may.

For between that inordinate proneness to sensual good, and the motions that take rise thence there is a difference. *That* cannot well be said to be without us, which is the bent of nature. But *these*, though they are *within*, yet produced by the presence of external objects, and being acts really distinct from that natural disorder of inferiour powers, do as it were environ and ensnare our souls no less than the suggestions of the devil do. *That* we can nor hinder, nor lay off *these*, though sometimes we cannot hinder from rising up, yet we can cast them down again; and these now we stile temptations.

The

The devil, or our own corruption (1.) Suggests them. (2.) Then they are delighted in by the flesh. (3.) Forthwith consented to by the Spirit. (4.) After that approved by both, and with the first unhappy opportunity put into execution.

*Αποδιδύμωσι

Answerable to these four degrees of temptation I find four several significations of ἀποδιδύμωσι (besides those you heard) four ways to remove them, to each *his* way, as if the *Apostle* had meant in one word to furnish us for all.

The first is *Rejicere*, to *reject* or *refuse*. The second *exponere*, to *expose*, as they do infants, when they cast them out to the mercies of the wilderness. The third *Differre*, to *defer* or *delay*. The fourth is the *Syriac interpreters*, *Solvamus à nobis*, to *untie our selves*, for that we use to do when we are entangled, as ἐνδεΐσαστον intimates we are, or if you please to take the Verb to the Participle, *Deponentes curramus*, to *lay it aside* and *run away*.

*Ενδεΐσαστον
ἀποδιδύμωσι.

So then, when a temptation at first presents it self clad in adulterate beauties, reject it, *bar* it out. (2.) But if it have got in before thou be aware, give it no entertainment, fix not thy thought upon it with curiosity or delight, but presently *cast* it out of doors. (3.) If thine unhappy negligence have won thee to a delectation, delay at least thy consent, *withdraw* thy self awhile and divert thy thoughts to some other object; Death, Judgment, Hell, or Heaven. But if thou be fallen to consent too, the only remedy left thee is to *untie* thy resolutions, to unravel thy thoughts, thy admitting, thy delighting, thy consenting, to undo all and fly away.

In brief *thus*: Temptations *thus* to be avoided. (1.) The suggestion by repelling. (2.) The delight by casting out the thought. (3.) The Consent by withdrawing. (4.) The *defence* by flying.

(1.) The *surest* way, when all is done, is to take these untimely brats, and dash them against the stones, against that *corner stone* Christ Jesus. (2.) The *safest* way, to hide thee in the holes of that *rock*, the wounds of his side: ἀποδιδύμωσι *reponentes*, laying your souls up *there*, and *recondentes*, burying your sins in the meditation of his passion and sufferings. (3.) The *securest* way, *exponere*, to lay them open to thy Ghostly Counsellour, *thou* shalt find them vanish in the air. (4.) The *warriest* way to flee all opportunities whatsoever. Indeed, if the devil fight against thee by troublesome and piercing thoughts stand to him and resist him, ἀποδιδύμωσι *thrust* him from thee; if he besiege thee with delights, *deponentes curramus*, *run away* from him. It is not cowardize, but wisdom; He that fights against pleasures *may* overcome, he that runs from them, is sure he does.

Τὴν ἐνδεΐσασ-
τον.

Take this, lastly, for a general rule. If temptations rise so many that they swarm about thee like Bees; fight not against all at once, they are too many, but τὴν ἐνδεΐσαστον. *The principal, that* single, hand to hand.

Nor is *this* all. This τὴν, this *Article* seems to point at some special ἐνδεΐσαστον, something *yet* more adequately opposed to νέφος ὁμιλημάτων. The *Cloud*, a *cloud of Martyrs*, good company, what more answers to it than a dark thick mist of ill Companions? What more opposed than good and bad examples? What temptation more deserves an ἀμαρτία, the name of sin, or sooner brings us thither? Or a τὴν ἐνδεΐσαστον, the title of easily besetting us? What hangs more fast upon us? What clings more near us? What more ensnares us? And what more needs a τὴν, an *Article* against it?

We'll

We'll sum up all in the advice of that mighty Counsellour: *If thy right hand*, thy Counsellour on whom thou leanest, or *thy right eye*, thy friend by whom thou seest, *offend thee*, (give me leave to make a *Parenthesis* to go on with the interpretation) *if thy right eye offend thee*, if thou canst not look upon a woman (though with no ill intention) but lust will arise; if the eye of thy reason dim thy faith; if thy right eye of *contemplation* become an offence, and puff thee up, *erne & projice, out with it, cast it from thee*. Better it is to go into heaven lame, and blind, and ignorant, and poor, and friendless, and alone, than to go down to hell with company. Remember *ἐν δεικνύει* here, and then as I have now done with *peccatum circumstans*, so shall you; that you may answer your Lord in St. Peters phrase, *Ecce nos reliquimus omnia*, Behold, we have left all, our sins, possessions, honours, pleasures, occasions, our dearest friends, our very thoughts, & *sequuti sumus, to follow thee*, to run after thee. *Curramus per patientiam*, that's next to *Deponentes*, to cast off sins, then run from them.

And can we less? *I will run the way of thy commandments*, cries holy David, *when thou hast set my heart at liberty*. Set him but at liberty from these weights and snares, and you cannot stay him. *Curramus.*

Yet why so fast? No less than running? Give me but a man once thoroughly freed from these heavy chains, he'll tell you so. No hast enough from these miseries, says he that felt them.

And 'tis but just, for run we did before, the wicked his feet are swift; *Certamen.* but that's down hill; ours is a Race, upon even ground *that*.

Well, but the World has its *certamina*, its Races too, and such as are *abjecto pondere*, cast away all, Riches and Possessions. That's for Gallants, ours *ἐν τῷ ἀγῶνι* a race for Christians.

How's that? Please but to joyn it to several words within the verge of the Text, and you shall see.

Joyn *ἀγῶνα* to the words before *ἀναγῆται ἐν δεικνύει*, such a race that is a running from sin, *certantes contra peccatum, ver. 4.* and it will prove *certamen* *justitia*, the race of righteousness; St. Pauls *κατακλῆμα καὶ τὸ ὄνειδος*, the keeping under of his body by fasting and abstinence, *ἐν τῷ τρέχειν*, so ran he, 1 Cor. 9. 26. *Certamen justitiae.*

Match it with the words that follow *ἀποφύγετε ἵνα ἴναρ*, that it be such a one that looks to Jesus, then you have *certamen fidei*. St. Paul call's it the *good fight*, where he tells us he has *finish'd his course*; he has kept the Faith, 2 Tim. iv. 7. and it seems the very intent of St. Paul here, who had reckoned up so many *Per fidei* in the Chapter next before, to which this seems but a confusion. *Fidei.*

Yet you may lay it to *μαρτυρίαν*, and then it will be the Race of Martyrdom. *Certamen fidei* oft times proves so. Ver. 4. *Nondum certastis*, sometimes turn'd to *Certastis usque ad sanguinem*. *Per patientiam* so close shews some affliction towards; and *ἐν τῷ μαρτυρίᾳ ἀγῶνα* together cannot well be less than to an agony. A Race, *this*, that crowns the Victor with a Diadem, the brightest of all created glories, brighter than the Sun. *Martyrii.*

And yet even *this*, if *propositum* be wanting, will be thankless. If it be taken up of our own heads, and not proposed. Nay, if it be proposed in general to be good, if it be not *propositum nobis* so to us; if God propound it not to us, as most convenient for the time, the cause, the persons. *Else* when they persecute you in one City, flee to another; 'twas his counsel whose the Martyrs are, St. Mat. x. 23. But if be at any time *Propositum nobis* set before us, so propounded, then *good luck have you with your honour*, ye blessed of the Lord run on, and your right hand shall teach you terrible things. *Certamen propositum.* *Propositum nobis.*

But yet, if you would fain be *Martyrs*, you may be *Martyrs* without dying. *I die daily*, saith St. Paul a living *Martyr*. Would you know how that is? There is a spiritual Martyrdom, that sometimes equals the others torments with its own difficulties. (1.) Abstinence in the midst of swelling plenty. (2.) Humility in the pride of rising glory. (3.) Meekness in the confluence of domineering injury. (4.) Chastity in the flower of blooming youth of sparkling blood. (5.) Bounty in the depth of poverty. (6.) Joy in the abyss of misery. (7.) Charity to our enemies in the height of their insulting cruelty. (8.) Obedience in the hardest Precepts, that most cross our own opinions and desires. This the race, without which the other is but a naked title, an airy name. *This is always Propositum nobis*, the race of them that seek thy face O Jacob.

Per Patientiam

And now I speak of Martyrdom, I should not forget *Per Patientiam*, Patience the proper vertue of a *Martyr*.

Quid.

Patience hath Pain for her object. So then to *run with patience* is to fear no pains so we may finish our course, to undergo all for *faith* and righteousness sake. 'Tis no small thing to cast off all delights and pleasures, we have been at that in *Deponentes*; 'tis much more to endure evils too, that's in *Curramus per patientiam*. The Christians life is a very race of patience. He suffers all.

And patience is chearful. He does not only suffer evil, but welcome it. 'Tis more, 'tis *ὑπομονή*, not *ἀποχή*, μένειν *ὑπὸ* to tarry, stay, abide under it, not to be weary of it presently. 'Twas but a desperate speech of the Son of a Murtherer, so *Elisba* stiles him, *why should I wait for the Lord any longer?*

More. *ὑπὸ* is under, then keep thy self *under* still; let's have no pride in patience; *under* afflictions; then think they come from above, and take them so, with all submission, as not worthy, but *below* the mercy of punishment.

Not tarry under only, but tarry till the end too. *ὑπομονή* is as well perseverance as patience; and *Per Patientiam*, *per* is through, so run through not part of the way. Patience runs the Race, but perseverance keeps the Goal.

Neither is this enough. Patience has been long mistaken for a heady daring and braving of deserved punishment. 'Twere well we would remember *Patientia* comes from *Pati*, Passive we must be only here; suffer evil when it comes, not thrust our selves upon it.

Per patientiam curramus.

Running indeed is *agere* not *Pati*, and the *Primitive Christians* upon some secret inspirations (who knows) perchance to dant the fury of their Persecutors, by their chearfulness have run to torments. *Vos autem non sic*, we have not that warrant; and yet we may be active too. *Curramus per patientiam*, let them be companions, never without *Per*, or *Cum* between them, never sever'd. Patience is a dull, heavy vertue without *curramus*, without *faith* and *righteousness*, without life.

Active enough we may be, but not in seeking crosses. They'l come fast enough themselves. There's time and place for *curramus*, when in the midst of injuries we *run* to heaven for succour. Thus also *Curramus per patientiam*, both joynd do well together, Patience and Prayer.

Quomodo curramus.

That *Patience* may have her perfect work, and we all with joy finish our course, it will not be amiss to tell you, *how* the very words would have you run, what the very words would have you observe in running.

1. Running is our swiftest course: Such must your speed be *here*.

2. Running is a motion that actuates every part. Our running must

must be so ; total, universal, soul and body, not a member idle.

3. 'Tis the liker so to be if we do *certamen currere*, that is, *Currendo certare*, strive to do it. 'Tis a Race, and in a Race there run many ; strive who shall run fastest. Do it emulously.

4. Strive, yet not so strive as the Sons of strife, to provoke, but to love, says St. Paul, Heb. x. *One curramus* joyns us all together, and let us keep *H:b. 10. 24.* so ; in *Us*, not *I* and *you*, but let *us* run unanimously.

5. That it may appear so. Remember *ἀγωνία* comes from *α* and *γωνία*, *without corners*. Such let your course be, *open* to the world. Run not, separate not your selves into corners. *Veritas non querit*. Let the *Donatists* to their *Conventicles* ; for by the way I cannot pass but tell you, that *ἀγών* in prophane Writers signifies *Templum*, a *Church* sometimes, as if our course could not be *right* if it bent not thither.

6. To run into corners, as it separates from others, so it breaks the bond of charity, as it entombs our works in darkness, so it eclipses the Divine glory. 'Tis but to hide the Talent in a Napkin, or a sign we are ashamed of our Religion, when we closet up all our piety and devotion.

7. Not into corners, not *aside*, neither on the right hand, nor on the left, no way of your own finding out, but *τὴν προκειμένην*. The way that lies before you. The *Kings high way* you cannot miss it.

Yea, but if we miss of a happy end, 'twere all one as if we mist of the way. Yes, but *set before us* it is ; Who set it ? He that is our crown and glory, 'Tis before us, we then to look forward, Whether ? Unto *Jesus*, *ver. 2.* to the joy that was set before him, the same *verse*, unto the throne of God, the last words of that *verse*, and the last of our desires. He that proposed the Race, proposes the Prize, and sets on the Crown, ye cannot now fear lest you should run in vain.

Propositum nobis.
The Crown.

Now therefore so *run with patience*, chearfulness, humility, courage, constancy, with all your speed and powers, emulously, and yet altogether, openly, yet not to be seen, streight on, yet upward, and all the way your eye thither, *so run that you may obtain*.

I have now almost run my self out of breath, and you out of patience. *Ideoq.* Give me leave to run out my *Text* too, for I am come to the conclusion. *Therefore run.*

'Tis a *Cloud* of *Saints*, therefore away with sins, that other *Cloud*. 'Tis a *cloud* about us, then off temptations too. 'Tis a *Cloud*, *Et qui sunt illi qui ut nubes volitant*, the quick flying cloud, *therefore run* at least. 'Tis a *cloud* of *Martyrs*, *therefore run with patience*. 'Tis a *Cloud* that God has set about us, and 'tis the race he has set before us ; both set, that *this* may be run.

Had we not a guide it might seem unreasonable to force us to an uncertain journey ; or were it not a guide from heaven, we might as easily fear misguiding ; or were it a star, our eyes might dazle into blindness, and we lose our guide ; could we fear the sad melancholy of a solitary way, we might pretend it uncomfortable. Should we want the quickning eyes of beholders, we might fear to falter by the way for want of encouragement ; were we to run through the furies of flames we might startle at the hardness of the employment, or should we be commanded to disavow the pleasures of a convenient life, for all the austerities of a pœnitential rigour, we might stand confounded at the task ; were the way full of circling Labyrinths we might fear our erring inevitable, or were the Race voluntary, not set before us, we might then use the freedom of our choice, or were it of an uncertain length, not set out, to run in *infinitum*, we might account it vain ; or were there no Crown to

run for, despair might kill the life of our affections. But having a guide, and that from heaven, a cloud to compass and defend us that nothing harm us, not the Sun look too hot upon us and discolour us, so great that the wandering eye cannot lose it, so near encircling us, that the weary step may almost rest upon it; a cloud that cleaves it self into an ample theater, where you find both company and spectators, where by the examples of a world of Saints surrounded, where by the steps of tender Virgins and little Children taught the easiness of the way, where by the Crowns, and Robes, and Palms of Martyrs too transcendently glorious assured of our reward, seeing we are to bid adieu to nothing but our misery and our sin, to leave only the courting of our own damnation, when it is no more than an easie run to heaven, no studied torments in the way, no tedious or eternal journey, a plain certain way, directed by him who will as well help us forward as command us, what colour of excuse for the least remissness?

Say no more but that we had a guide; a guide is not given to go alone, and a guide from heaven deserves not so to be disrespected; but guide and company both thence to be neglected, what name shall I stile it by? *Run while you have the Cloud.* The time may come, when we shall have no *Habentes*, when we shall not dare to look upon this *Cloud* for shame, when our sins shall stand so thick about us, that we cannot look through them, nor up for them, when we shall strive to run and this weight and snares so hinder us we cannot stir, when these *witnesses* shall turn to be Witnesses against us, when we shall desire this *Cloud* to cover us and it will not be, when we shall not have so much as *cum patientiâ* left to help us, but weary of our selves run from hill to dale to hide us, and cannot run out of fight; and were it not better *now* to run for something, than *then* to run in vain?

Great certainly is the force of example, will that do it? 'Tis here to the full. Did the *Jewish Saints* who had not so clear a light to run by, nor so clear or full promises to run for, nor so skilful guides to run after, nor so full a glory to run into, chearfully fulfil their course? And shall *we*, whose knowledge as much excels theirs, as theirs did ignorance, who do not so much see as enjoy the Promises, after so fair a Troop, into so perfect glory, move on heavily? How oft have Royal Virgins met the terrors of a long and subtile death with the same countenance they would have met their Wedding joys, and Children run to torments as to play? How oft have Kings and Princes (fifty of our own within the space of two hundred years) chang'd their Kingdoms for the house and bread of poverty? O blessed Spirits, how lamely do we halt after you! How do we dishonour your aged glories by us so often boasted of, and scatter, as it were, your sleeping ashes in the wind by our degenerate Christianity! How do ye even hide your selves in clouds, and blush to see us call *that* Religion, which ye would not have call'd by so honourable a title as prophaneness!

What if without example? Is it not enough that God propounds it? Had it been some greater matter ought we not have done it? Will reward? But why stand I upon any when we have all? And may I not then well add therefore run?

We have set the *Ideoque* upon *Nubem*, upon *Tantum*, upon *Habentes*, upon *Martyrum*, upon *Circumpositam*, upon *Pondus*, upon *Peccatum*, upon *Circumstans*, upon *Curramus*, upon *Certamen*, upon all; and being now at the end, I shall leave it upon the last, *Propositum nobis*, the reward of our pains,

That

That when this *Pondus mortale*, *this body* be laid aside, and we have done our *Race*, we may sit down with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, where for this *Cloud*, we may dwell in light, for this *sin put off*, be cloathed upon with long white Robes, for that *sin which did beset us*, be circled with *Cherubims* and *Seraphims* about us, for this *Deponentes* find a *Depositum*; for laying off, a Crown laid up, and for this *weight*, an eternal weight of glory. And in that last great Day, when for this casting away, *this earth* also now about us shall then cast off its heaviness into lightness and agility, shall we our selves be caught up together with these *Saints in the Clouds* to run and meet the Lord in the air, where though to others it be a day of clouds and thick darkness, yet shall *this Cloud*, and we in it shine like the Sun in the Kingdom of the Father.

To which he bring us who going hence ascended up in clouds with triumph, and shall one day come again in clouds with power and glory, to dispel all clouds and darkness into an everlasting day, *Jesus Christ*. To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all Power, and Praise, and Honour, and Thanksgiving, and Worship, now and for ever. Amen.

R. July 8 - 1849.

A
S E R M O N
UPON
St. Andrews Day.

St. M A T. iv. 20.

And they straightway left their Nets and followed him.



Is well, say I, that Sundays and Holy days sometimes meet, that 'tis as well Sunday as Holy-day to day, that so the Lord may be sometimes hallowed in his *Saints*, as here followed by them. *Dauids Praise God in his Saints* (for so 'tis to be rendred, *Psal. cl. i.*) may by this means be sung still, and preach'd yet sometimes in spite of that peevishness and malice that has so impudently and ungraciously un-fainted all the *Saints*. Not so much as an *Apostle* allowed that Name. Not a *Saint* left in the whole *Christian Kalendar*, if I may call it *Christian* that so uses the *Saints* of *Christ*.

Well, though the course of the times has thus robb'd God of his glory in his *Saints*, and the *Saints* of their honour, and of (if it could be) their very rejoycing in their beds ; yet the course of the years, as it were to confute that frowardness, will bring it about ever and anon that the *Master* and the *Disciple*, the Lord and his *Saints* shall rejoyce together upon a day ; and if they may not be allowed their several Feasts will yet sometimes feast together, be remembred together, as *St. Andrew* and his *Lord* to day, do what they can to hinder it.

For this day, as it now falls out, is solemn both for *Lord* and *Saint*.

And amongst the *Saints* *St. Andrew* is the first in order, for here the *Christian Church* begins her *Festivals* (I know not what or whose *Church* to call it that has none) and fitly too does she begin with him, who was the first that followed *Christ* from *Galilee*, says *St. John*, *Chap. i. 41*. Fit sure that he should lead the rank that there begun it ; that brought the great *St. Peter* as his second, *ver. 42*. though afterward for that excellent Confession of his, *St. Mat. xvi. 16*. made the first. Yet just certainly it is that *St. Andrew* too should have his *Primacy*, and so the *Church* has given it him, to begin the *Army* of *Saints* and *Martyrs* in her *Kalendar*, that we may see no man shall lose any thing by his speed to *Christ* ; the more haste to him, the more honour for it.

I shall not yet this day, though it be the first of *Advent*, much meddle with that, or primarily or very particularly set my self to speak of Christs *Advent* or coming. I shall be content (because we are not like to meet many such opportunities as this day in conjunction brings us) to speak this day of the *Disciple*, and only glance at his *Lord*. We shall have many occasions to speak of the *Master*, few now a days to take notice of the *Disciples*. Yet for all that cannot we well speak of the one without the other. The honour of the *Servant* will redound always to the glory of the *Master*. It is for that that we commemorate the *Saints*, that we may so magnifie the King of *Saints*, both by acknowledging his greatness and goodness in them, and by doing gloriously to the honour of our *Master* by their examples.

And indeed we cannot separate them; and as the Text falls out it ends as all the praises and commendations of his *Saints* should end in him, *αὐτῷ*. And it begins with a conjunctive Particle which will refer us to him. And with an also, or an *ἐν*, which to make the Text to be understood will make us look back to an *ὁ*, *ἐπεὶ αὐτῷ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ, ver. 18*. This *ὁ* to that *ὁ*, this *ἐν* to that *ἐν*, this *And* to another *And*, this their following to Jesus walking, this *And* they left and followed, to *And* Jesus walking and calling them to follow, in the two immediately foregoing verses.

We shall then, for the full sense of the Text, and the honour of the day, not quite separate the *Lord* and his *Saints*, but joyn the *ὁ* and the *ἐν* together, speak somewhat of Christs coming as well as of their following; though more fully of this, it being expressly in the words, the other but implicitly or implied, yet referring this wholly to the glory of that, their following here to Christs coming before, *St. Andrews exite to Christs Advent*, joyn them both as the day does for us.

For in the words are both, though just as in the day; the one swallowed up by the other, the Holy-day in the Sunday; only with this difference, *St. Andrew's Feast* in the *Advent*, in the day, the *Advent* in *St. Andrew's*, in the Text. The day more evidently for the *Lords day*, the Text for *St. Andrews*.

We will forget neither, but must follow the Text, where we are to consider two *Particulars*: The one exprest, the other implied. (1.) *St. Andrews Festival*; and (2.) the *Feast of Advent*, or the grounds of each; the ground of *St. Andrews Festival* expressly, his leaving his *Nets* and following *Christ*. The ground of Christs *Advent* implicitly, that it was straightway done, that is, presently upon Christs coming and calling to him. You see Sundays and Holy-days are at no such variance but they can stand together; their grounds too, both Scripture grounds; both from the same Text too. Our new *Reformers* may as well deny the one as the other, and no doubt if they stand but in their way a little, they will too. Only some day must be kept up a while to preach the cause: when that is done, *Ye observe days, and months, and years*, will be as good a Text against the *Lords day* as his *Saints*.

But not to trouble you with the Division of days, we will afford you another Division of the Text.

- I. *St. Andrews* and together with him his brothers obedience exprest, *They straightway left their nets and followed him*.
- II. The ground of it in *ἐν* and *αὐτῷ*, in the first words and the last, intimated and implied. Jesus came first, and walked by the Sea, and lookt upon them, and spake to them; *And*, and what then?

And

And they straightway followed. Followed? Whom? *Him*, says the Text. *who's that?* One that was worth all their nets, one that would make them fishers indeed, Jesus, *ver.* 18. for *him* it is they leave their nets, and *him* they follow.

In their obedience there are three particulars: (1.) The readiness; (2.) The sincerity; (3.) The rightness of it.

1. It was straightway, there's the *readiness*.
2. It was to the leaving of their nets, their very life and living, all the poor living they had, there's their *sincerity*.
3. It was to follow *him*, there's the right placing and bestowing their obedience.

In the *ground* of it, we shall see their obedience was not groundless, for that it was,

1. Not without a just and lawful call; Jesus call'd them first, *and then* they followed, and not *till* then.
2. Not without a powerful, effectual, and enabling call, which so soon and suddenly could make and enable them to leave their whole course and means of life, and very *straightway* follow him.
3. That it was not any but *Christ*, not anything, or hope, or interest, but only *Jesus*, the true *Messiah*, him they followed, whom you shall see anon they had good reason to conceive was worth all they could leave or do. The ground of their obedience was neither rash, nor light, nor sinister. It was discreet, and wise, upon just call; it was powerful upon, a strange, sudden, powerful change of their affections; and it was right and due to him they paid it, *Jesus* the *Christ*.

I begin with the exprefs parts of the Text, with St. *Andrews* and his *Brothers* great and ready obedience to Christs Command and Call, which is the Lesson you are to learn upon St. *Andrews* day, that which you are to learn now particularly from him, as upon the days of other Saints, their particular vertues and graces, which is or should be our *Holy-day* business; and if it had been but so taught and learnt, we had never seen prophane *Kalendars* for Christian, these unhallowed days, or our holy-days unhallowed, God deprived of the glory, or we of the examples, as much as lies in these mens power, of his Saints.

Two there are in the Text, St. *Andrew* and St. *Simon*, though but one in the day. Christ calls by couples, that the one might help the other, if the one should fall the other might help him up; that St. *Andrews* fortitude, for that's the interpretation of his name, might strengthen St. *Sims* obedience, which is the English of his, and a courageous obedience, the meaning of both together the proper Lesson for the Text and day.

Three Points we promised you to consider in their obedience, readiness, sincerity, and rightness, we now prosecute them in order, and their readiness first. And they *straightway* followed him.

Verus obediens nescit moras. True obedience, says St. *Hierom*, knows no delays. He that stands disputing with his Lord, or bargaining and conditioning with his Master, or long consulting with flesh and blood, will scarce deserve the name of obedient, even when he after so long does what he is bidden. The temper of the obedient soul is far other. St. *Paul* tells us, when it pleased God to call him, and reveal his Son in him, that he might preach him among the heathen, he did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, nor go up to *Hierusalem* to the Apostles to be resolved, but

but into *Arabia*, and so again to *Damascus*, about the work that God did send him, *Gal. i. 16, 17*. When God sets us about his business, our own fleshly interests, or carnal friends are not to be consulted with, lest they hang upon us, and hold us back; nor are we to stay the calling of a council, even of spiritual friends, before we set to our obedience in things so evident as Gods Commands, but into *Arabia* the Desert rather, that is, to throw off all delays, to desert those petty demurs that rise always upon a change. After that indeed, after we have first broken the threds that held us, and made worldly affairs and relations stand off a little, we may return to *Damascus*, with *St. Paul*, to that *succus sanguinis*, as it is interpreted, to the juyce of our blood, to consider and weigh our strength to particular points of our obedience, but we must thence to *Hierusalem* to the *Apostles*, and such as have been before us, and such as are set over us to confer about the ways and means to correct and purifie our blood, to refine our flesh, to get strength of counsel and direction how to break through all lets and obstacles, and obtain strength against our weakness, and so return again to *Damascus* after the other interpretation of the words, *incendii similitudo*, to burn up, as it were, the stubble of our affections, to purifie and inflame them with the divine love, with holy charity, which with its active flame will enliven and quicken us, that we shall straightway follow our Lord whithersoever he will, without delay, demur, or disputation.

The young man that proffer'd fair to follow Christ, but first desired to go and bury his Father, was forbidden it, *St. Mat. viii. 22*. Even an act of charity, such as is the burial of the dead, must not be preferr'd before obedience. Indeed, with *Elisba* peradventure, *1 Kings xix. 20*. we may have leave to go kiss our Father and Mother at our parting, to use civilities to our friends, and with some little solemnity leave the World and them: Gods work does not make us unnatural or uncivil, 'tis none of his, whatsoever is pretended, that makes us unnatural, that makes us disrespectful of our friends, or uncivil to them, or utterly renounce the bonds of nature and relation. It only requires that they should not hinder us, that they should not stay or let us from our Masters business. Kiss them we may, but kiss and part, not stay long upon Ceremonies when we are about our Masters business, much less defer our following him till they are dead and buried, till they forsake us first. We must first be of the parting hand, and let nothing keep us from him any longer than necessities and just civilities do exact.

Nay, for these too, we are to ask his leave. And if he answer us, as *Elijah* did him, *ver. xxi*. Go back again, what have I done unto thee? Go, but consider what I have done. Go, but consider, *quod meum erat feci tibi*, I have done my do, thou must make hast if thou wilt find me, or overtake me, thou must not look for a second call; then go back we may, and slay our Oxen, and boil their flesh with their Instruments, and give unto the people that they may eat, dispose of our affairs, but with what hast we can, not stay the resting or fetching so much wood to boil it, but with their own instruments at hand, boil them all in haste, take the quickest course we can imagine to dispatch, to give away much of our substance also to the poor and needy to make more haste, and then arise and go after him, and administer to him of the rest.

But if he answer us, as Christ did the young man, *Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead*, there is no striving then. If (as sometimes he does) he call us in a nick of time, where the opportunity of doing good is now

in prime, and if we stay but a little it will be gone. Then let the dead bury their dead, let even that natural charity be performed by some body else, go we whether we are sent, do we what we are bidden, and think we that Christ says to us what he said to St. *Peter* upon some such like dilatory quere, What is that to us? Follow we him.

Let us always think when we hear him calling us to his service, whether the Call be inward or outward, within us by his Spirit, or without us by his Minister, that we cannot make too much haste to follow him. It may be he has called his last, and will call no more; or he will be gone if we make not haste, and we shall then at least have much ado to find or overtake him. 'Tis no easie overtaking him that *rides upon the wings of the wind*, if he be once gone out before us. 'Tis not safe to loyter by the way, for fear of temptations that may prevent our good purposes, and quite overthrow all holy resolutions. 'Tis an unworthy usage and unmannerly to stand talking to any thing else when God is speaking to us to come to him. 'Tis dangerous to play away our precious time in excuses and follies, in other business, nay, even in good business of our own, even in an act of private charity or devotion when God calls us to his publick service and obedience. Christ calls even *Judas* to do his business quickly, you may well think he would have St. *Simon* and *Andrew* be as quick in theirs; Nay, they were, for in the midst of their work he called them, *ver. 18.* and in the midst they leave; away with Nets, come Christ, fish who will for them, they'll follow Christ, not so much as stay to draw up their Nets, be what will in them they care not; let all go so they may catch him. Nay, more, and if the Spirit of Christ be in us, we will, with him, be pain'd and streightned till his business be accomplished, though it be such a Baptism as he was then to be baptized with, even suffering and dying for his name. There can be no excuse from our attendance upon him with the first, who will not at all stay with us if he be not the first in all our thoughts, if we prefer any thing before him, or any business before his. Nay, if we leave not secondly our *nets* too, all our own business for his.

Regnum Dei tantum valet quantum habes, says St. *Gregory*. The kingdom of heaven is worth all we have, must cost us so, be it what it will. And alas! what have we the best, the richest of us, as highly as we think of our selves, and ours, more than St. *Andrew* and his brother, a few old broken Nets?

What are all our honours but old Nets, to catch the breath of the world, where the oldest is the best, and that which has most knots, most alliances and genealogies, the most honourable?

What are our Estates but Nets to entangle us? 'Tis more evident now than ever; to entangle us in strange knots and obligations, in vexations and disquiets, in fears and dangers, to entangle silly souls beside in vanities and follies?

What are all our ways and devices of thriving, but so many several nets to catch a little yellow sand and mud, and if you will have it in somewhat a finer Phrase, a few silver scaled fishes, in which yet, God knows, there are so many knots and difficulties, so many rents and holes for the fish to slip out of, that we may justly say they are but broken nets, and old ones too, the best of them, that will scarce hold a pull, all our new projects being but old ones new rubb'd over, and no new thing under the Sun.

What are all those fine catching ways of eloquence, knowledge, good parts

parts of mind and body, but so many nets and snares to take men with. It may be finely spun, neatly woven, curiously knotted, but so full of holes, vanity, and emptiness, that no net is fuller than these things we take so much pride in, so much delight in. Nay, this very body itself is but a net that entangles the soul, and the rational soul itself too we too often make but a net to catch flies, petty buzzing knowledges only, few solid sober thoughts; at the best but a net for fishes of that watry and inconstant element, watry, washy, slimy notions of I know not what, of flitting worldly things; so full of holes too, that all good things slip out of them.

Our very life, lastly, what is it but a few rotten threds knit together into veins and sinews: The strings and powers of a thin and immaterial soul knit to the threds of a feeble body, so slender and full of holes, and the knots so loose, that the least stick or stone can unloose it, or break it all to pieces.

And are not these pretty pieces think you now to stand so much upon the leaving? That we will rather leave our Masters service than these broken nets that will bring us up nothing but slime & mud, a few fins and scales, a few sticks and weeds, a few stones and gravel, things only that will dirty us, or delude us, or run into our hands and pierce them, or into our feet, like gravel, and race them; or at the utmost but a few fish, slippery or watry comforts that will either quickly leave us, or but slenderly comfort us whilst they stay. Are not these fine things to quit heaven for? Oh *blessed Saint* of the day, that we could but leave these nets as thou didst thine, that nothing might any longer entangle us, or keep us from our Masters service!

Not that we must presently quit all honours, estate, and ways of gain, bodies, and souls, and life, and throw our selves into dishonour, poverty, and death, in that instant we propose to follow Christ, but that we must know we cannot follow him if we cast not off our inordinate affections to all of these, use them as if we used them not, enjoy them as if we had them not; so humbly bear our honour as if we sought none else but Gods; so manage our estates as to give an account to him for every farthing; so use our trades, as if our whole business were to trade for heaven; so feed our bodies, as if their chief food were the bread of heaven; so employ our understandings as if they were to mind nothing but heavenly things, and so live as if we had nothing else to do but die; so cast away our nets as if we had nothing now to do with them, now we had caught Christ, or but to catch and hold him.

Worldly honour may consist with Christs, our greatest estates with the true riches, our lawful busiest Vocations with his service, our secular learning with heavenly knowledge, the care of our bodies with the salvation of our souls, our lives with his death; only they must not stand in competition for time and place, but be all left to his disposing; and when at any time they cannot either stand with his service, or will hinder it, then leave them all we must to follow him, as occasions and opportunities shall require the forsaking any of them, be it life itself. Alas! he loves not Christ at all, that loves any thing above him, any thing equal with him, that prefers any thing to him, or will not readily leave it for him.

We have read of many who have left their Thrones, and cast away their Scepters; many who have thrown away their riches, and deserted their estates; many who have given over all their thriving ways; many

who have bid adieu to all secular studies; many who have in strange austerities and mortifications neglected, nay, *crucified* their bodies, and others that have run to death as to a wedding, that so they might the easier follow, or the more happily attain to their Masters steps; but these are singular and particular *heights*; the ordinary course of Christianity is by a lower way. Yet is the way good too. *Et omnia deserit qui voluntatem habendi deserit*, says St. Hierom; he also verily forsakes all, that desires none, nothing but *Jesus Christ*, who has crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, as the Apostle speaks, *Gal. v. 24.* the world with all the desires thereof, who though he has all he can desire, yet desires nothing but what God will have him.

Sometimes it may fall out that we must leave our callings to go after him, when they be either truly sinful, or evidently dangerous, and our wealth, when it is unjustly gotten, or unrighteously held, we must restore and leave to the right owners of it. Sometimes again it may be lawful for us to leave both Estates and Callings, though we be not bound to it, as when we plainly see we can thereby serve our *Master* better, and he seems to point us to it; when we perceive we cannot else perform the Task or Calling he has designed us to, or the business he has already set us upon. Otherwise, let every man, says the *Apostle*, *abide in the Calling wherein he is called*, and stir not from his station but when he may lawfully and orderly be made free from it. 'Tis not presently from the *Counter* to the *Desk*, from the *Loom* into the *Pulpit*, from the *Shop* into the *Church*, from our *Nets* to our *Books*, from secular Trades to the holy Function that we are to run, there is something more than so when the *Apostle* bids men stay and continue in their Callings. And to follow Christ is not only to be *Apostles* and Teachers, for who then shall there be to be taught? And to satisfy all from the example in the Text, this is the third time of St. *Andrews* being call'd. To the knowledge of Christ he was call'd, St. *John i. 38.* To his familiar acquaintance, St. *Luke v. 10.* and here, thirdly, and St. *Mark i. 17.* to the *Apostleship*; so many steps even these here made ere they came to be *Apostles*, and not till now threw they quite away their nets to return no more unto them. 'Tis no such hasty business to become *Apostles*, or succeed them in any point of their office. Yet truly, when Christ shall give any of these hasty heads power to do wonderfully, to shew miracles, to manifest their calling, and to do extraordinarily, as he did to these, then we were much to blame if we would not allow them that, God has extraordinarily call'd them to it, and what were we that we should oppose against it? But in the mean time lets see them leave their *nets*, their private interests and hopes of gain, and repute, and fame, that we may have reason to think they follow Christ, and not their own bellies, fancies, and humours.

Yet we can tell them too of those who have done more than the most they dare pretend, have left all, expressly all, and yet no followers of Christ. Heathens have done it, *Socrates*, and *Bias*, and *Thales*, and *Crates* the *Theban*, and *Fabircius* the *Roman*, yet Christ not followed by it. And I know they will say as much of the Hermits of the Desert, and the Brethren of the Cloyster, that (though they have done what they dare not think for Christ) yet they have not followed him. And could these great Confidants shew what they have done or suffered, or lost or left for Christ, yet by the same Argument their own they cannot prove they follow him the while. But alas, they have left nothing but what they should not, their proper Callings wherein St. *Paul* would have them abide

abide with God. And it is not Christ but the loaves they follow, not Gods glory, but their own. For if we but examine what was their following in the Text, and the grounds of their so doing, (as we shall anon) it will appear quickly whom they seek, what they follow too, who pretend only, or rather only pretend so much now adays to follow Christ. Let's next see whom St. *Andrew* followed when he left his nets, and how he followed.

Christ it was he follow'd, for this *Him* is *He*. (1.) Not his own profit sure, he could hope for little from him who had not where to lay his own head. (2.) Not his ease and pleasure in his company, who was always hungry and thirsting; and yet had scarce bread to eat, or water to drink, or time to do either, watching, and walking up and down about his Fathers business till he was faint and weary, and yet nor place nor time to rest in, not to sleep but he must be awak'd as soon almost as he is laid down. (3.) Not his own honour certainly under a Master who was the most rejected and despised of men, as the *Prophet* styles him, called *wine-bibber*, and a friend of sinners, and deceiver of the people, and a worker by the devil. Not his own humour or fancy, but Christs powerful Call that so straight transform'd his mind, and raised him to a faith that could so suddenly part with all without murmuring, reasoning, or taking care for a future living. In a word, not any thing but *Him*. But him then how did he follow?

1. He followed him with his body, gives himself to be one of his menial Servants and continual Attendants, content with such coarse fare and cloathing, as his poverty would allow him, partaker of his fastings, and watchings, and journeyings, and hard lodgings, and painfulness, and weariness, and reproaches, to teach what our bodies must be content to endure for his service, and in following him.

2. He followed him with his mind, gave up his understanding to be informed, his will to be directed, his affections to be ordered by his Doctrine and Precepts; for to follow Christ is to resign up our understandings to the obedience of faith.

3. He followed him in his life in patience, and meekness, in humility, in poverty of spirit, in mercifulness, and doing good in the life and practice of Christian virtues, liv'd an admirable holy life; went up and down from Country to Country, into *Macedonia*, and *Achaia*, into *Scythia*, and *Ethiopia*, preaching Christ, and following Christ whithersoever he call'd him, and this is properly to follow Christ, to imitate him. And

4. He followed him in his death too, was also crucified for him; followed him so chearfully to that, that says St. *Bernard* and the Story of him, He seeing the Cross afar off thus joyfully saluted it, *Salve crux diu desiderata & jam concupiscenti animo preparata, ecce gaudens & exultans ad te venio*. Welcome sweet Cross so long desired and wish'd and long'd for, and now come at last, I come rejoicing, I come leaping to thee; I come, I come.

Thus I have shew'd you how St. *Andrew* followed Christ, how we also are to follow him; to throw away our Nets, not only all unlawful ways of gain and preferment; nor all things that stay and hinder us from the service of our Master; but any thing, every thing that may entangle us, or keep us from the readiness and exactness of our attendance; and having so prepared our selves, to conform our selves presently, after his example, to humility, to patience, to meekness, to doing good, to obedience, to acts of mercy, to fastings, to watchings, to praying, to
any

any hardship or affliction; no more now to seek our selves, but him; not our own praise, but his glory; not our own profit, but the profit of our Brethren; not our own private fancies, but Christs Precepts, and the Saints examples, so to follow in their track, in the ways, and orders, and obediences that they have traced us, and to be content to part with any thing, with all our own magnified imaginations, all our own desires, our goods, and estates, and repute, and ease, and quiet, and life, and all, whensoever he pleases to call for it. This is truly following Christ. And whatsoever else we have in St. *Andrew*, following him as an *Apostle*, is particular, and concerns not any at all but those, who by some signal outward visible Call are commanded to a more immediate attendance on their Master. To thrust our selves into that without that ground is both impudence and presumption; to follow our own proud hearts and giddy heads, and not him that they here followed, who followed him not, either as Disciples, or Apostles without good ground. Let's else examine it.

He came himself and publickly and professedly called them to him. In secret he tells *Pilate* he had said nothing, St. *John* xviii. 20. All the people could bear witness to his doings, that his Followers might know for ever he would have none to enter into such offices without a solemn and publick calling. To his Doctrine, to be his Scholars and Disciples, perhaps he will admit us in private, or by night, as he did *Nicodemus*, or in the croud and multitude together, but to be Apostles, and Preachers of that Doctrine, not without a publick and particular ordination and authority, that shall equivalently say as he did to these Brothers in the verse before the Text, *Follow me and I will make you fishers of men*. Nay, more, St. *Mark* iii. 13, 14. he picks them out that he calls *Apostles*; does it with great solemnity. Goes up into a mountain] that was then, as it were, his Church; and calls unto him whom he would] not who would themselves; And they came unto him] they, and none else. And them he ordained] (the very word the Church uses still.) He ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.] Lo here, what a solemnity Christ makes of it, of making *Ministers*, who certainly, had he intended any should make themselves, or any Ministers but those Teachers and Preachers who from him and his Apostles derive their power, the *Bishops* and *Fathers* of his Church, would not with so much solemnity, so ceremoniously, so publickly, so punctually have thus ordained those whom he intended should be in nearer attendance to him than others, to whom he would commit the preaching of his *Gospel*, and the dispensation of his *Ordinances* to the world.

This is not all: They had another ground of their calling, a second reason of their following. They were enabled to it by a strange and sudden change within them, whereby they found they could now already do what he called them to. They were now become quite other men, meerly spirituall, no longer Seculars; away with temporal business, they minded worldly things no more, but straightway to *him* without delay. This inward Call, though alone it be not sufficient, yet joyn'd together with the outward is good ground indeed to follow Christ any whither soever. And unless thus God either on a sudden, or by time, by extraordinary or ordinary means shall enable any man for his service and Ministry, and by the outward power also call him to it, he shall bear his sin that undertakes it, whoever he be, that he did not send; he

is one of those that God complains of, that runs *when he is not sent*; and though the pretence be to stay the *falling Ark*, the Church from perishing for want of teaching, his sin is *Uzzahs*, that touches holy things without this double Commission, *Perez Uzzah* is his place; a breach he makes in the Church, and God will one day break out upon him that thus breaks into the Church, not by the door, but some other way; that neither being enabled within, nor from without, or within and not from without, or without only and not from within, whom God has not given both inward abilities and outward calling to the handling of his holy mysteries and dispensations.

They have a third ground yet why they leave their nets, and 'tis to follow Christ. They know and are assured who it is they do it for, and why they do it. It is the *Messias*, it is the *Christ*, says St. Andrew to his Brother Simon, St. John i. 41. And so stands the case, they can no longer tend his business and their nets together. This is the third time they were called we told you. To the meer knowledge of him they were called first in that place of St. John; to a nearer familiarity, St. Luke v. where though they leave their nets, yet 'tis only for a while; but here being called to follow him to the Apostleship, they wholly leave them altogether. They saw his power before in the miraculous *draught of fishes*, which made them leave their work for a time to follow him, but now they feel it warm within them they cannot stay, shall I say, to draw up their nets, or to cast them in, though they were now casting and about it, but *straightway*, the word no sooner out of his mouth, but they at his heels. When we are sure it is Christ that calls, that him we follow, no hast too much, no leaving too much, no following too much for him. For him if it be, we may leave all without danger, but if we be not sure it is, it would do well to have a net to take to. I speak this for that too many leave their nets, their business, their work, and bestow themselves and theirs upon things that are not *him*, nor *his*; upon false Christs, upon deceivers, upon such as, what ever shew they make, will be found upon examination to seek their own, and not Jesus Christ. 'Tis fit we should look it be Christ indeed, not our own ends, not leave catching fishes to go lead silly women captive laden more with sins than ever St. Andrews Net with Fishes. If it be for some new device of late, which our *Fathers* have not known, which Christs Church has not received, some new sprung pattern in the *Mount*, it is some *New Christs*, not the old ones, some false ones, not the only true ones, who being God blessed for ever is always like himself. He that leaves any thing to follow those new calls or callers, either to be a Teacher or a follower of them, had better keep his nets though broken ones.

The *Sum* is, we are to have good ground for what we do, an *And* to begin with, and a *him* to end in, good authority to go upon, and the right end to go to; sufficient abilities, and lawful authority to send us if it be as labourers into the Vineyard, and a true Christ to serve with them; good reason too (2.) we must shew for all our actions in Christs Religion and Worship, though we be but to follow only as Disciples, just power to commend it, and the infallible glory of Christ and his Church to design it to. So our obedience to be ready, sincere, and upright when we can perform and are required it by Christ and those that under him have the commission to call us to it, or command it for his service, or his Churches, and we not to undertake it till we find our selves truly enabled, rightly called, and uprightly intending in it.

To

To joyn now the two *Points* of the *Text* together, to know our right grounds, and settle our obedience right upon them, that we may know what we undertake when we undertake to follow Christ, and do accordingly, not pretend above our strength, but keep *Advent*, and St. *Andrew* both. We are (1.) to provide by St. *Andrews* obedience for Christs *Advent*, that he when he at any times comes to us either in his Spirit, or in his Word, in humility or glory, in our lives, or at our deaths, may find us ready straight to follow him. No so acceptable entertainment for him, no so fit preparation for him as a ready, entire, well guided obedience, none so fit to receive him as St. *Andrew*, the Soul so fitted and resolved to all obedience. Thus we are to make our way for *Advent* by St. *Andrew*.

And to keep St. *Andrews* Feast, to give ourselves up to this obedience, we must remember Christs *Advent* to us, that we cannot follow till he first come to us, acknowledge all our motion is from his. Look he first upon us, and speak to us, and we straightway run; but if he come not, there is no following to be expected, much less hast to do it. All is from him, to him therefore be all the praise if at any time, or wherein at any time we follow him, 'tis his grace that does it, that comes first before we follow.

And then thirdly to keep *time*, to joyn both Feasts together in our hearts all the days of our life as well as in this day of the year; Magnifie we him in his Saints, follow we St. *Andrew* as he did Christ, follow him to Christ, chearfully without delay, to day, whilst it is day, begin our course; let us not think much to part with any thing for him. Lay our honours, riches, souls and bodies at his feet, and with pure and unmixt intentions study we wholly his service, not our own.

Let not any be discouraged, that perhaps he has nothing worth the leaving, nothing but a few old broken nets. Be it never so little we have left, if we have left our selves nothing, but given our selves and all to Christ, we have given much; he that, with these Saints here, leaves nothing but a few knotty threds, if he has no more to leave, has left as much as he that leaves most, for he has left all, and he that leaves most can do no more. It is the *mind*, not the *much* that God values. Remember the poor *Widows* mites, accepted by Christ above far greater gifts, for they were all she had, and who could give more? The poor mans all is as much to him, and as much *all* to God as the rich mans all; his tatter'd Nets as much all his living as the others Lands and Seas are *his*; and the poor man can as hardly part with his rags and clouts, his leather bottle, his mouldy bread, and clouted shoes, as the rich man with his silks, and state and dainties; so much perhaps the hardlier in that they are more necessary.

Yet that I may not seem to leave you upon too hard a task to scare you from following Christ, I shall now tell you, you may keep all, and yet leave your nets. You may keep your honours, you may preserve your estates, you may enjoy your worldly blessings, only so keep a hand upon them, or upon your selves that they be not nets and snares unto you; let them not take your hearts, or ensnare your affections, or entangle your souls in vanities and sins; let them not hold you from following Christ, and keep them while you will. Cast but off the Networks, the catching desires of the flesh and world, and so you also may be said to have left *your nets*. And having so weaned your souls from inordinate affections to things below; Let Christ be your Business, his Life your Pattern,

Pattern, his Commands your Law. Be ye followers of Christ, and let St. Andrew this day lead you after him into all universal obedience, ready, pure, and sincere, think not much to leave your Nets for him that left heaven for you; you will gain more by following him than all the nets and draughts of the world are worth. You may well throw away your Nets, having caught him in whom you have caught glory, and immortality, and eternal life, and by following him shall undoubtedly come at last out of this Sea of toil and misery, where there is nothing but broken nets, and fruitless labours, or but wearisome and slippery fruits of them, into the Port and Haven of everlasting rest, and joys, and happiness.

And that it may be so, let us pray with the holy Church in the two Collects for Advent and St. Andrew.

Almighty God which didst give such grace to thy holy Apostle St. Andrew that he readily obey'd the calling of thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed him without delay, grant unto us all, that we being called by thy holy Word may forthwith give over our selves obediently to fulfil thy holy Commandments; that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light now in the time of this mortal life (in the which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us with great humility) that in the last day when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost now and ever.

A
S E R M O N
Preached
At St. Pauls.

C O L. iii. 15.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful.



How little or much soever the *Colossians* needed this advice, I am sure *we* do more than a little, and much need there is to press it close. For I know not, but methinks as much as we talk of peace, and write it in the front of our *Petitions* and *Projects* I am afraid our hearts are not right to it, it rules not there. And as much as we pretend our thankfulness to God for bringing us again into one body, we see but slender expressions of it. And yet we have the same Arguments both for thankfulness and peace, to be thankful for our late recovered peace, and to be at peace if we would be thought to be thankful, as the *Colossians* had or could be imagined to have here: our being called again into one body who were not long since in several ones, united now under one head, who were of late under many; Gods Call, and our own *Callings*, Gods present mercies, and our late miseries calling to us, to perswade both.

There wants indeed some *St. Paul* to mind us of it, to preach it home; that we would be what we pretend, that men would be honest once, and either say no more than they mean, or do what they say; be content at least to be at peace, and not disturb it, but let it rule, (so the *Apostle* would have it, and so it should) rule in our hearts, and rule in our lives; rule in our hearts, and make them unanimous; rule in our tongues, and make them thankful; rule in our hands, and keep them quiet; rule in our actions, and make them peaceable; rule us all into one as we are called into one, rule us all into one mind, and one heart, and one soul as we are in one body, rule us as a rule sent from God to rule us; For 'tis the peace of God we speak of, and we ought every way we can to be ruled by it, and be thankful for it.

'Tis *St. Pauls* request here in the *Text*, or his command rather to the *Colossians*, yet the better to commend it home to you, I shall divide it into two parts: The

The *Motion* for peace and thankfulness ; And
The *Arguments* to perswade them.

If you will draw the Motion into smaller parcels, for six things the Motion is : (1.) For peace ; (2.) For the peace of God ; (3.) For the Rule and Dominion of it ; (4.) For a place for it to rule in, our hearts. (5.) For the manifestation and expreffion of it in *ευχάριστοι*, by being gracious and compliant, as *ευχάριστοι* sometimes signifies in Scripture, and may do here, and does, so say St. *Ferom*, and St. *Chrysostome*. (6.) And lastly, for our being *ευχάριστοι* again in the common sense, that we would be thankful for it. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, and be ye mild and gracious, or be ye thankful.

And the *Arguments* for these are full as many in number as the Motions.

(1.) You are called ; you are *Christians*, that is, the sons of peace, let peace therefore rule among you. (2.) 'Tis that also which ye are called to, and let it therefore rule. (3.) In one body ye are too, let it therefore rule your hearts into one also. (4.) Into this body ye came not by chance, came not of your selves, *ἐκλήθητε*, ye were called into it, God brought you, brought you lately to it. For this goodness sake of his be rul'd a little, now ye are once again called together be at peace one with another. For (5.) Unthankful ye will be else, the proof of your thankfulness lies upon it, and therefore let this peace of God be in your hearts that ye may shew your selves to be thankful. Nay, (6.) and lastly, gracious ye cannot be, but graceless and perverse creatures you will seem if ye stand out now, and therefore whatever has been hitherto, let the peace of God now really rule your hearts at last.

Thus I have given you the Text in Parts, which all together give you this in the sum, that it lies as a duty upon us all to let peace rule among us, to endeavour by all means that it may, to use all arguments for it that we can both to our selves and others, and be thankful that it does so much as it does, that it does in part, and let our thankfulness more and more encrease as that encreases.

But I pursue the Parts, and make my first Motion for peace it self.

I. And truly 'tis worth the Motion, worth the moving for. *Pacem te,* thee O peace, say the Poet with an *Apostrophe*, who would be without thee ? *Te Poscimus omnes*, Every body would have peace ; all but the ungodly, no peace to the wicked, indeed they have, they would have none. They have none among themselves, would have none among us. They fish best in troubled waters. All else are for peace and quiet. God is for it, he is the God of peace, *Rom. xv. 33*. Christ is for it, he both commanded and bequeathed it, *St. John xiv. 27*. *St. Mark ix. 50*. The Apostles are for it one after another, *St. Paul*, *St. James*, *St. John*, *St. Peter*, *St. Jude*, they all commend it, *1 Thes. v. 13*. *St. Jam. iii. 18*. *1 Pet. iii. 11*. *2 John 3*. *Jude 4*. The Prophets before them were for it, they proclaimed it, *Isa. ix. 7*. *Jer. xiv. 13*. *Ezek. xxxvii. 26*. *Hag. ii. 9*. *Zech. ix. 10*. *Mal. ii. 5*. The Angels are for it, they bring and sing it, *St. Luke ii. 14*. All good men are for it: Their daily Prayer is, *Give peace, O Lord, though it be but in our time only*. So, rather than not at all. Nay, though, with *Hezekiah*, in other things it go hard with them, yet that's good for all that, *Isa. xxxix. 8*. *2 Kings xx. 19*. Good and pleasant also, *Psal. cxxxix. 1*. Many good things are not so, fasting, and watching, mortification, repentance, and many other vertues, good they are, but they are not pleasant ; peace is both, to dwell together in unity pleasant as well as good, very pleasant, and very good. O quam!

so good and pleasant, that he is fain to leave it upon the question, he cannot answer it; or leave it with an exclamation, *O quam!* leaves us only to admire it, at the goodness and sweetness of it. The messengers that bring but the tidings of it too, how beautiful are their very feet? *Rom. x. 15.* Yea, even afar off, upon the tops of the mountains, says the Prophet, *Isa. lii. 7.* afore they come near us. As far as we can see them we adore them; they are the *only Evangelists* that preach peace, they bring the Gospel, their words no less whose words are peace.

And no wonder; for Peace is a word of that vast Latitude, that all Gods blessings are folded up in the very name. It signifies all the temporal, and all the spiritual, yea, and all the eternal goods we can expect; Glory, and honour, grace, and mercy, and truth, life, and plenty, and joy are in their several turns joyn'd with it, you may so read them ever and anon, *Rom. ii. 10. Tit. i. 4. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Zach. viii. 16.* To wish us peace, is to wish us all; to pray for peace, is to pray for all; to give peace, is to give all.

But the *Notion* being so large and general, we must distinguish it to understand it the better here. There is an outward, and there is an inward peace. There is a Spiritual, a Temporal, and an Eternal peace; or if you will, there is peace the *Blessing*, and peace the *Grace*, and peace the *Reward*. Our hearts, I hope, are for them all; but that which is here to rule them is peace the grace or vertue, the study and pursuit of peace: the other are our happiness, *this* our duty.

And of this, two kinds we have in the *Text*, the *Particular*, and the *Publick* Peace, both to be endeavoured. The particular, among our selves, of one member with another: The General, of the members with the body. The first is with our Brethren and Neighbours; the second is with the *Church* it self. Peace among our selves, that must be had, says *St. Paul*, *1 Thes. v. 13.* And Peace with the Church, as the whole body, there must be too; for there should be no *Schism* there, says the same *Apostle*, *1 Cor. xii. 25.* And, *here*, to speak of Peace, and make the being called into one body the motive to it, must needs mean the union and agreement both of the members with one another, and with the body it self.

II. Yet, for all that, there may be a body with which there is no joyning, and men to whose Assemblies our honours may not be united; the Motion therefore now, secondly, for Peace, is no farther for it than it is the *Peace of God*, or as some Copies read it, the Peace of Christ; that is, such a one (1.) as God commands; Such a one (2.) as Christ wrought; Such a one (3.) as Christ practised.

I. Such a one as God commands. Now what's that? A Peace it is, (1.) that is joyn'd with *righteousness*, *Rom. xiv. 17.* in which the *fruit of righteousness* is sown, *Isa. iii. 18.* Not such a Peace, or Combination rather, as that we read of, *Prov. i. 11, 12, 14.* where they all agree so far as even to have but one Purse, and one Lot among them, but the business is to lay wait for blood, and lurk privily for the Innocent without cause, that they may find their precious substance, and fill their houses with spoil; we have had enough of that. The Peace of God is Peace that will do righteousness, not that Peace that devours the *righteous* and all.

A Peace (2.) it is that is joyn'd with *holiness*, if it be Gods. So we find them together, *Heb. xii. 14.* No Sacrilegious Peace, then, where the Churches Patrimony must be shared among them, or they will not be quiet: *that* were to sell God to buy Peace; or indeed to sell them both, to sell God out of doors, and Peace out of doors, and all out of doors,

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our selves at last, we know it well enough; but I know not how to call it, whether worldly peace, peace only upon worldly interests; or the Devils peace, that is only for, thou Christ, or thou Anointed of the Lord, why didst thou come to diseale us, to disquiet us, to turn us out? We were well enough at peace before thou camest; let's alone in our usurpt Possessions, and then perhaps we will be content with peace; but for this peace of God and Christ, this holy peace, it is not for our turn, we skill not of it; our Spirits are not made for it.

Nor are they for the third sort of Gods peace neither, that which is in the unity of the Spirit; and yet 'tis not the peace of God that is not so, *Eph. iv. 3.* When we Pray, and Preach, and Prophecie, and say *Amen* with one heart, and mouth, and spirit, when we do all things with decency and order, after one fashion, with uniformity, unite and agree so, then our peace looks like the peace of God, who is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace, even such a peace, *1 Cor. xii. 33.* the peace of God is the peace of Order and Uniformity.

And his Peace (4.) is peace in believing too, *Rom. xv. 13.* where we all agree in the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *Eph. iv. 13.* Diversities of Faiths and of Opinions, however they may seem to knit sometimes in an outward Community, cannot yet challenge to that external agreement the title of the peace of God. There must be among us an unity of Faith as well as an uniformity of Order to make up this peace. Men are not left to believe as they list, nor take up what Opinions they please; as there is but one Lord, so there is but one Faith, says our *Apostle, Eph. iv. 5.* where there is more, the unity of the Spirit will not be kept, the bond of peace (whatever is pretended for the Prophecying liberty) will not hold them together, when opportunity is presented to break it with advantage.

But I remember I told you some *Copies* read Christ here instead of God. The matter is not much, the business but the same. The peace of God is the peace of Christ. For between God and us Christ wrought that peace, which is the ground of all the rest; and such a one also now (2.) as he wrought between God and us, would he have us see what we can do to work one with another. That was between persons at the greatest distance, the greatest enemies, so must ours be too, if it be Christs peace. Peace between friends, if they jar a little, is soon made up; no greater a business than the Religion of a Publican will reach to; the Christians peace takes in enemies too; sends us from the very Altar even to seek a reconcilment with them; then also when, for ought we know, we have given them no offence, though they have taken it, *St. Mat. v. 24.* Sends us the world throughout to make peace, even with all men, says *St. Paul, Heb. xii. 14.* this is Christs peace; such a one he wrought, and such a one it is that we must follow.

One Point yet higher, from his practice: Such a one it must be (3.) as he practised, not only to love our enemies, and be at peace with them, if possible, but to hold our peace if they reject it, and revile us for it. There are Spirits in the World (and they would fain set up for Christs more than any) that pretend they are for peace as much as any, but they cannot hold but they must open their mouths, and extend their lungs, and let loose their Pens to enlarge the breaches. *Micah's Prophets*, such as God complains of, *Micah iii. 5.* that make the people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry peace; that bite, and backbite both *King* and *Church*, and all that truly endeavour peace; that, with him in the *Proverbs*, throw
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abroad their fire brands, where ere they come, among the people, and yet cry, *Is it not for peace?* But let these men remember there was *one* both the Author and Example of our peace, that being reviled, reviled not again, that could hold his peace before the *Sheerers*, and *Murderers*, though they fly daily in the faces of them that seek *their prosperity* and peace, and by the bowels of Christ beseech them now at last to be reconciled to Christ and the Church, to unite with us in the bonds of peace. 'Tis but a righteous, a holy peace, a unity of faith and order, a general reconcilment, and peaceable language and deportment that we desire of them. The peace of God you have heard is such, and our request is but the Apostles, that this peace now may rule among us. That's our third Motion, the third Particular of the Text for the Rule of peace.

3. The word that is here translated Rule has much more in it, several senses. And peace it self being of so large a notion, and so general a concernment, I may, I hope, take the liberty to use as many of them as will serve my turn.

Let's take our own Translation first: *βραβεύτω, moderetur*, let it Rule. Wars and dissensions have ruled long enough, let peace rule now. Many passions there are that bustle in us for supremacy when there rises any contest between us and our Superiours, or between us and our Equals. Envy would carry it, Anger would over-bear it, Discontent would order it, Pride would decide it, Honour would dispose it, Interest would drive the trade, Lust would sway it, Covetousness would have all, Peevishness would have more; but let peace for all that, and none of them rule the business, says the *Apostle*. What we do let it not be to gratifie our envies, nor to satisfy our spleens, nor to humour our discontents, nor to court our prides, nor to exalt our reputes, nor to drive on our interests, nor to fill our purses, nor to fulfill our lusts, nor to sooth our peevishnesses, but to promote Peace and Unity among all we have to do with. The unruliness of these passions are the things that hinder it; whilst we give way to *them*, to any of *them*, we are nothing but combustion. These are to be laid down at the foot of peace, nothing done by us upon their accompt, and then we shall be quiet.

Nay, not only over the passions let peace bear rule, but even among the virtues, There *βραβεύτω* in the second sense, *palmam ferat*, let her wear the Crown, bear away the Prize. *ἐνὶ πάντιν δὲ τέτοις*, ver. 14. this above them all. Bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, put them on all; but *this* above them as a robe of honour. Excellent graces all; but the bond of all that *ties* them all together; the bond of perfectness, which perfects all; why! 'tis *this*; for *ἀγάπη* there is but *ἐνότης* here; Love in that verse is the peace of God in this. [For *ἐνότης* is from *ἐνεν*, to knit together, and so fits *συνδεσμός* the bond there as well as does *ἀγάπη*, and *τὸ θεῶν* here fits *τελειότης*, as well as love does there also: God being all perfection, and his peace a knitting or binding God to man, and man to man, and man to God, so perfecting all.] Where this is wanting we are but imperfect; nor is our virtue nor our felicity complete. He is the perfectest Christian that is most for peace, and he only conquers (what side soever at any time prevails) who makes peace, or does most for it.

But as peace must rule our passions, and crown our virtues, so it would do well to decide our controversies, the third sense of *βραβεύτω*, *dijudicet*, or *determinet*. If controversies or differences arise among us (as rise they will) let us first consider calmly on them, weigh them without passion, discuss

discuss them without noise, treat of them without heat; and if they chance to be so troublesome that they cannot easily be decided either by reason of the eagerness of the Disputers, or the interests of the Parties, or the abstruseness of the question, the Spirit of peace will quickly do it. Keep thy Faith and Opinion to thy self, *Rom. xiv. 22.* trouble neither thy weak nor thy strong Brother with them, disturb not the peace of the Church about them, but sit down, and rest thy self in the decision of the Church; be content with general terms of agreement, and draw not out Controversies into nice expressions; *the peace of the Church is commonly* (I may say always) *more considerable than the question*, and he determines best, that either determines, or is determined for peace.

To do this the better I shall give a fourth signification of *ἡσυχία*, *Hesych.* *Medius sit vel arbiter*, let there be a Moderator or Mediator made to moderate the contention. This does well we find in all particular Contests, cannot but do so surely in the Churches. We must not always be our own Judges. Best refer it, and then either our Superiours or our Laws will be the fittest for it. But what ever may be perhaps objected against Superiours in particular, the Law and Canon they stand always impartial judges; they cannot be accused to lean either to the one or the other, they are akin to neither, and not capable of flattery or a bribe; let them then be Umpires between us, and decide the matter.

Yet to be sure to keep the peace, let there be order kept: So *ἡσυχία* (5.) signifies, *ordinet*, let peace set some order now among us. The Apostle St. Paul was very careful of it when he spent two several Chapters to the *Corinthians*, the xii. and xiv. of his first Epistle to prescribe it. Indeed, peace cannot consist without it, where there is no order there can be no peace; where there is confusion there can be no quiet; that body must needs be torn in pieces where the members draw several ways; that Church into more, where the members of it do what they list, go which way they please. No keeping rule for peace without keeping order.

After all these readings the *Vulgar* comes in with an *Exultet*. And though I can scarce guess how it came to be the interpretation of *ἡσυχία*, yet it comes not amiss to tell us that Gods peace does not make dull and heavy hearts. It makes us merry, it makes us glad, stills all the grudges that rise within us, all the quarrels that rise without us, every thing that would disturb our quiet. Nothing so glad, so merry as the soul that dwells in peace, where peace keeps Court, which is reconciled to God, at odds with no man, in amity with all: Thus all the Triumphs of the world are much below the Garlands of Peace; and the Apostle may not only well say *Moderetur*, let it rule; but *Exultet*, let it triumph, and let us triumph when it does.

And now to sum up the severals, that you may know at once what it is to have peace rule. If the peace of God rule truly in us, it must over-rule our passions, it must advance our virtues, it must decide our differences, it must compose our quarrels, it must work us into order, and it must make us chearful under its commands, in our obedience under it. So it will infallibly if it once be seated where it should be, in our hearts. That's the place the Apostle would have it exercise its rule and dominion in, the fourth Motion he makes here to us in the behalf of peace. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts.

4. And were it once but sincerely there, it would rule our words into a milder key, our actions into a smoother dress; we should hear no whispers against the Government of Church or State, no feigned jealousies of Superstition

stition coming in, no talk of, I know not what, *Persecution* coming on, no canting of sad times at hand, no suggesting of vain fears, no fomenting all distates, no reviving those wretched Principles and pretences that first ruin'd all our peace and quiet, no scattering *Libels* and wonders up and down to amuse the people, so to hinder them from reunion with the *Church*, and keep them in perpetual discontent for they know not what. These are not the words of such as seek the peace of *Sion*, or heartily pray for the peace of *Hierusalem*. They are not the words of peace (my Brethren) not the ways of it, nor do they become the Messengers or Servants of the God of peace. To raise needless scruples, to canvase every word and tittle, to make a noise and puther about every trifle, to flutter and keep a stir as if we had much to say, to make it out in number where it wants in weight, to write and scribe over old objections answered over and over a thousand times, to talk of peace, and thus make ready for the battle if it must pass for peace, 'tis a peace that passeth all understanding in another sense than the *Apostle* meant; we cannot conceive it, we cannot understand it.

Would we but lay down our interests, our envies, our animosities, our prejudices, our pride, our humours, the justifying our selves and doings, the glory we take in a false constancy, that Magisterial conceit we have of our own judgment, and that *Popularity* that undoes all, were these out of the heart, peace would be quickly in. But if we stand upon punctilio's, and will not pray but in our own words, will not worship God unless we may do it in what Form we list our selves, will not appear in the Congregation unless it be in one of our own gathering or choosing, will quit the *Church* rather than an *humour*; if the *Church* musick and harmony must drive all concord and agreement out of doors, if the garments & emblems of peace and purity affright us, if order scare us, if Uniformity drive us out of the *Church*, if kneeling at the Altar and Feast of Peace must go for a reason to keep us from it, if the very sign of the Cross of Christ, by which we were reconciled, for by his Cross it was, says the *Apostle*, must needs be made an Argument against all reconciliation, 'tis a sign we have no hearts for peace, our hearts are not at all for it, who may have it at so easie a rate, upon so handsom terms, and yet thus rudely thrust it from us, as if we had sworn & covenanted against it, and all the ways that can lead to it. Fain would we see some better expressions of it, if it be otherwise. Let's try the *Apostles* in the next particular, examine it by our ordinary deportment & behaviour, whether *that* be *euryeistos*, mild and gracious as it should.

5. What our common Translation here renders *grati*, thankful, *St. Chrysostom*, and *St. Jerom*, I told you, and from them *Erasmus*, turns *gratiosi*, gracious. In this sense we find *euryeistia*, *Eph. v. 4.* and *euryeistos*, *Prov. xi. 16.* Both senses the word may bear, and the Connexion will bear them too. And to do both right we will balk neither, we will take both, *Gratiosi* first. Be we mild and gracious, kind and amiable.

The *Apostle* says it fuller in *ver. 12, 13.* beseeches us to be *tender and compassionate, meek and humble, patient and long-suffering, forbearing and forgiving.* These are the best symptomes and expressions of peaces ruling. The words of peace are smooth and sweet, they are no swords; the looks of peace are mild and chearful, they are not fower or dogged; the hands of peace are soft and open, they are not rugged or close, they are easie and stretched out to all that come in to them. These are the ways of peace, and the best means to draw it on. To look always austere and muddy, to carry scorn and superciliousness in the countenance, to be unfociable

unsociable and untractable, to run as far contrary as is possible, to receive or joyn with none but upon our own conditions, and reject all that look, and speak, and understand not just as we do our selves, is so far from the paths of peace, that I shall not stick to call it an open defiance of all the World. Yet such men there are; & some that add to all, a renunciation of all the forms, and words, and signs of civility, and make it Religion to be unmannerly, and fullen. I know not what sense these men can have of peace, who come not so near as the salutation of it, addressees to it.

And truly, I have but little to say for them neither, who after so many condescensions from their *Sovereign*, so great compliances, so long forbearances, so much forgiveness, so fair a time given them to consider and come in, and resolve all petty scruples (for there are no other) are not yet composed for peace; who the more is yielded, the less they are satisfied, the more graciously they are dealt with, the more averse and forward they are to a reconciliation; the nearer *we* come, the further *they* fly from us. Only I know I am bound by St. Paul here to be *εὐχαριστος*, to think and speak as mildly and gently of them as the thing will bear. I would *they* would do so too.

Yet methinks if they like not *Gratiosi*, they might do *Grati*, if they like not to be gracious, they might however to be thankful, thank God, and thank the *King*, and thank the Church for their graciousness and forbearance, be *εὐχαριστος* in the second sense, in that of thankfulness. 'Tis the last Motion I have to make out of the Apostles, that ye would be thankful.

6. 'Tis a duty I'll assure you that lies upon us. For *it becometh well the just to be thankful*, *Psal. xxxiii. 1.* I cannot tell you any thing more becoming. No not more becoming us in regard of the mercies mentioned in the *Text*, the Peace of God, and the calling us to it in one body. Each of them so ample subjects for our thankfulness, that we cannot shew thankfulness enough for either.

Peace so great a blessing, that *Nil dulcius audiri, nil delectabilius concupisci, nil utilius possideri*, as one under St. *Augustines* name expresses it; a blessing than which there is none more pleasant to be heard, none more delightful to be desired, none more profitable to be possessed.

And Gods calling us to it in one day, calling us into one Church, calling us then, when we were almost out of call, some of us in very remote parts of the earth, some of us in dark corners at home, some of us in dungeons, some in dust almost, ready to go down into it, and be covered with it, calling us all together out of our several graves, as it were, into a new life, restoring us our *head*, and uniting it to the *members*, is so transcendent a mercy to us, that we can never be sufficiently thankful.

Yet that we may be somewhat thankful though, what is it to be thankful? I shall give you it in brief, (for I cannot be long) and leave you to enlarge it.

To be thankful then, is (1.) Humbly and heartily to acknowledge Gods infinite goodness to us, and our own infinite unworthiness of it. He that thinks light of peace and unity, that undervalues Gods calling us into one body, or thinks he did any thing towards it to deserve it, either understands not Gods goodness, or is not thankful for it.

2. To be thankful, is openly and publicly to confess Gods mercies, and our own engagements; to be telling of them all the day long, to make Hymns, and Praises, and *Panegyrics* daily for them. I need not be so impertinent to tell you 'twas *Dauids* business commonly to do so for mercies

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that were *not like* these, or quote the *Psalms* wherein he does. But words are not all.

3. To be thankful indeed, is by our deeds to shew it, to present our selves, and all that is ours henceforward daily to his service; to offer up our souls and bodies, and what else is ours, as peace offerings, and sacrifices of thanksgivings; never to fear we can do too much, never to hope we can do enough for what God has done for us in thus reinstating us in our Church and our Religion; thus bringing home our *Prince* and our *Peace*, and that not with thunder and lightning to punish or upbraid us for our former sins, not in a storm and tempest to fright us with a mercy, not with fire and sword to embitter the blessing, but in a calm, with a still voice, with joy and melody, with no other noise than that of *Hosannahs* and *Alleluiahs*. Be we therefore thankful unto him, and bless his name for ever and ever; for ever I say again, for we have no time here limited to do it in; only be thankful, still be thankful. *For a good thing it is to give thanks unto the Lord*, Psal.xcii.1. *Yea, a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful*, Psal.cxlvi.1.

II. Methinks I should need no arguments to you to perswade you to it, either to thankfulness, or to peace. Yet so many being in the *Text* I must not be so injurious to you or it to pass them by. Six I find in it to perswade to peace. Ye are (1.) called, called (2.) to it, ye (3.) are one body, called (4.) into that too, can neither be (5.) *Grati*, nor (6.) *Gratiosi*, can neither be thankful, nor appear gracious if ye be not for it, for the Rule of peace. And to be thankful and gracious you have good reason too; for your being called, for your peace, for the body you are of, and your calling into *that*, to be members of it, are all motives to perswade it.

The first Argument is your being *called*, and 'tis a good one. To be called is to be *Christians* in effect. *Κλητοι* the Adjective from *ἐκκλησιον* is so taken, 1 Cor.i.2. Rom.i.6. and the Verb it self in several places may bear it too, Eph.iv.1. and 4. Gal.i.6. Now to be Christians is to be the Sons and Servants of the God of peace, a very good reason, *that*, that the Son should be like the Father, the Servant be as his Master is. It was *Abrahams* argument to *Lot* to end all differences. Let there be no strife I pray thee between me and thee, or between my heardsmen and thy heardsmen, *for we be brethren*, Gen.xiii.8. It is the same for us but with some advantage. Let there be no strife between thee and me, for we be Brethren, for we be Christians. For if the Servants should not disagree when their Masters are brethren, because they are so, much less should they when they all have but one Master, and themselves are brethren. The meanest *heardsmen* should not by this reason; none of the *People*; but the *chief Shepherds*, the great Pastors (however) they should think upon their Callings better than to fall out one with another. *As the Elect of God, dearly beloved*, says St. Paul, ver.12. you must not, you must forbear, you must forgive, ver.14. 'Tis the best way to make your Calling and Election sure, to assure yourselves and the world (after all this) that ye are Christians. All are *not* that pretend to it. The Servant that fell a beating his fellow-servants was but an *Hypocrite*. I am sure he had his portion given him among them, St. Mat.xxiv.49. was cut asunder because he would joyn no better. For peace and true holiness go together, no holy men (however so called) who are not peaceable; false and hypocritical only is that holiness that is not joyn'd with peace, and those Christians no better; call'd so perhaps, but not in the *Apostles* sense, true Christians indeed. The truly called ones are all for peace.

But

But (2.) they are particularly called to *that*. So the *Apostle*, *Ye are called unto peace*, 1 Cor. vii. 15. Why? *Then let every man wherein he is called therein abide*, ver. 20. even in this sense too, every man stick to his Calling, for 'tis a *holy one*, 1 Tim. i. 9. we told you so just now, 'tis a *heavenly one*, Heb. iii. 1. peace dwells for ever there, no jars, no discords among the Saints or Angels. And seeing God has thought us worthy to call us to it, I hope we will bethink ourselves and walk worthy of it. Called I know we are to liberty, *Gal. v. 13.* but not to use it for an occasion to the flesh, but by love to serve one another. Mark the end of it, else, says the *Apostle*, for if ye bite and devour one another, take heed ye be not consumed one of another, *ver. 15.* Indeed, ye will; a strong Argument to perswade to peace.

Yet (3.) we have not only our general Calling, the being Christians, and our particular designment to it after that, but our Interests publick and private, both to perswade us to it, *we are in one body*. Now 'tis neither for the interest of the body, nor of the members to be at difference one with another. *If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it*, 1 Cor. xii. 26. And the body cannot be torn or rent but every Member is concern'd; the least scratch with a nail, or the prick of a pin, or the touch of a thorn may by the ignorance or cunning, neglect or ill managing of a heady Chirurgeon be improved into a *Gangrene*, or a wound that may make the heart ake, and all the members rue it. We lose our health ere we are aware, and the very neglect of a little air at a Cranny, or the slighting the pettiest stirring of an humour sometimes endangers life and all. There is nothing to keep us safe but order and peace, to keep the humours quiet, and the several members in due order. How has the body of Christ, the Church of God (of which we all are members) by the ill managing of a petty Controversie, through the negligence or ignorance sometimes of the Managers, or the sly cunning of an undiscerned or unminded Adversary, or the peevishness of a Party been often thrown into a confusion, and almost brought to desolation? If we love the Church (and we pretend it) nay, if we love our selves (and that we commonly do too much) we must agree together. We cannot hope our houses shall escape if the City be all on fire at every corner. Or 'tis but a poor comfort when we see *Polyphemus* devour our fellows to think only we shall be the last. And a vain confidence it is to suppose when a mutiny is once begun, that we can stop it when we please. Diseases and ill humours once let loose run insensibly through all the parts, we cannot retrace them as we list, or fix them when we will. Our very hopes of a recovery are lost in a moment, we have betrayed our selves by opening the way to confusion by our own contests, and the whole body drops into a carcase, and all is gone. If we would but consider our own bodies, and learn thence from our own senses (as the *Apostle* would have us in the fore-cited Chapter) we could not be so stupid, so senseless to draw on our own ruins by our Divisions. Methinks I cannot speak more sensibly to all the purposes of Peace, nor you understand them more feelingly, than by this *Metaphor* of the body and the members. Yet the Argument is much advanced by *ἐκλήθητε*, by our being called into it, by the favour that God has done us in bringing us into it.

4. That God has brought us into the Church, made us to be a body of Christians is a blessing we too seldom think of, yet 'tis a great one, and a great motive too to be at peace with our own happines, and not

disturb it. No man would divide his happiness who may enjoy it whole, much less divide it when he must lose it whole, divide from it and divide it from himself, least as for the divisions of *Reuben*, Judg. v. 15. so for this there should come nothing of it but grief of heart.

Again, (2.) we are called into *one body*, says the *Text*, certainly not to make it *two*, or tear it asunder into *more*; we are call'd into one, to keep in one, to love, and live, and die together; this *one* is an argument to hold unity.

I may raise a third Argument if I read the words exactly as they are, without the indulgence of construing *us* into *us*, read it as we do, *in one body* ye are called, called all at a lump, all in a body at once. However it was with the *Colossians*, whether called altogether, or by parcels, I am sure with us it was lately *in uno corpore*, the whole body of the Nation were called into *one* at *once*; Our happiness came all at a clap, and shot from *East* to *west*, from *North* to *South*, like lightning in a moment. The Land came not in by pieces, was not won in, as Lands are, by Conquest, one Town or Country after another. And will we then now tear off our selves by pieces into our late Confusions? Who has bewitched us that we should think to do it?

If we add for a fourth, as we may do well in a reflexion upon our selves, that *we* were called, who a little before seem'd cast away, call'd into a body who durst not for many years before appear in any, called into *one*, who were then scatter'd into many, call'd into one Church, into one Government, under one head; *then*, too, when we scarce had any name but by-names to be called by, and had made our selves unworthy of any by our sins; to be then called, and so called as we were, was even a calling us out of worms and dust, out of nothing to an anticipated Resurrection: And can we so far forget our selves as to undo our happiness, and divide again? Have the miseries of our late Diffensions so clearly slipt out of our memories, or are the squadrons and divisions of armed troops so blessed a fight within our Quarters? If so, God has done us an injury to call us into one, to cease our wars, and bring home peace and safety to our doors, and we do as good as tell him so whilst we either run our selves into divisions, raise them, or continue them. For unthankful, (5.) miserably unthankful, too, as well as foolish and inconsiderate we must needs be thus to condemn, to throw away our peace.

5. And shall we add *unthankfulness* to the bulk of our transgressions? I trow not. And yet we shall if we oppose the rule of Peace. To be thankful is to return somewhat answerable to the favour that is received. Now what more answerable to peace than peace it self, to the peace of God than peace with our brethren. And he that returns not this, returns nothing. He can no more have peace with God than love to him whom he has not seen, if he have not peace with his brother whom he has seen. To be sure he cannot be thankful that kicks Gods favours back again into his face, and unmannerly bids him take them again, he cares no for them. And yet we do no less when we despise and cast away the peace to which he has call'd us; we say plainly enough it is not worth the having whilst we do not think it worth the keeping. Nay, and all the blessings of peace, all Gods calling, and recalling us first and last out of sin, out of misery, out of confusions and destructions; the very name of Christians, and the uniting us again under one *King* and *Church*, are certainly no blessings in our judgments and opinions if we thus wilfully and contemptuously tear all in pieces rather than peaceably submit to their determinations for
unity

unity and order, where we have nothing to object, but that they are in things indifferent, which is in all mens reason else the greatest reason we should comply with them. And no man that truly thanks God for them can do otherwise.

I am loth to say what I must needs say now in the last place too, that they must needs be churlish and sullen as well as unthankful, no *ingrata* at all in them in the other sense neither, no mildness or softness, who after all St. Pauls Arguments for peace and union will not be perswaded unto it: For when God, that here calls us unto peace, shall one day call us to an accompt how gracious and thankful we have been for his calling us to it, what we have done or not done towards it; consider, I beseech you, whether you think seriously in your hearts that it will there pass for true endeavours for peace to answer thus: Lord, we have been all for peace, and we *petitioned* for it, but we could not have it upon our own conditions; We would have agreed for a Publick Service, but we could not have it of our own making; We could well enough have condescended to an Uniformity, but they would not let us, *that* were the inferiours, set the Rule; We yet agree in the Articles of the faith, only for indifferencies we kept still off; We are all saved too, we confess, by the Cross of Christ, but the very sign of it we thought enough to keep us still asunder; We were zealous for thy Worship, but we would not be confined to it by any imposed rule of reverence and order. We could indeed have yet submitted to it ourselves, but we, some of us, had taught the people otherwise, and were ashamed to unteach them; We might perhaps have easily come in at first, but now we have so long stood out, that 'tis not for our honour to retreat, they will call us *Turn-coats* and *Apostates*, and we shall lose the people quite. Gracious and kind notwithstanding we have been in our deportments, but 'twas only to our own Party; Thankful besides to God, though we kept not indeed any solemn days of thanksgivings, or as perfunctorily as we could, we would go no further. In the sum, we have done all we could to have peace upon our own terms, but we could not obtain it, unless we would submit to Decency and Order; and so it stands.

And when our Governours and Superiours, call'd to the same accompt, shall be content to stand to our own confessions, that they imposed nothing but things Indifferent for Unity and Order: Think soberly, I beseech you, on which hand lies the true plea for the endeavour of Peace, where lies the perverseness, where the compliance. And if this be the business, as I fear it is too near it, I shall leave the whole World to judge whether peace truly rule in the hearts of those, who upon their own terms only seek it; whether they answer their callings, or are thankful.

I say no more, I have said too much perhaps, yet I wish I had said enough to make up the peace: I shall only rally up the Apostles Arguments and dismiss you hence however in peace.

You have heard the Apostles and our motions and motives to peace. And now if we have any respect to our Christianity, any thoughts of our Vocation, any love to Unity, any consideration of Gods goodness, any kind of gratitude for his mercies, or would be gracious in his eyes; let the meekness of Christians, the remembrance of our Vocation, the Obligations to Unity, the endearments of Gods kindness, the reasonableness of gratitude, the hope of Gods favour, and our endeavour for the common happiness of the World engage us to peace, to Gods peace, to the Churches. To this we are call'd. And God that calls us to it, work us to it, work it in our hearts, and in our practices, by the same power by which we are called into one body make us of one mind, throw him who, &c.

A SERMON

Preached at

St. Pauls Cross.

Sir Richard Gurney being then Lord Mayor.

JER. XXXV. 18, 19.

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your Father, and kept all his Precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you.

Therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab the Son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.



He Text, you hear, is the Word of God; *Thus saith the Lord*, what ere the Sermon be like to be: And, if the Preacher stir no further from the Text, than the *Rechabites* in it from the command of their Father, the Sermon is like to be no less; and to be heard accordingly. I know whose work I am about, *Sic dicit Dominus*; I shall keep to that. *Thus saith the Lord*, begins the Text; and it shall run through and end my Sermon.

And I could wish I could begin it, as Christ did his at *Nazareth*, [*St. Luke iv. 21.*] *This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.* But then, I fear, I must leave out *Dicit Dominus*: Nor God, nor his Prophet can say so for that they call the greatest part of City or Country; or for the success we expect upon it.

I cannot therefore say, the Text is fit for the time, but, I am sure, 'tis needful. A Text of Obedience never more. A little of that well practised would make us understand one another, set all together again. 'Tis needful for *That*: and that's as much as Peace, Plenty, and Religion is worth.

Yet as needful as it is, 'tis well we have a *Dicit Dominus* for it: One
above

above that dares commend it. *Non dicit homo*; Nobody beneath had best to do it. Or, if he do, this too will be Popery and Innovation, the Doctrine of the Popish Clergy: Words as common in the peoples mouths for all they dislike, as ever *Dicit Dominus* was in the Prophets.

Well; be it what they will; say man what he please, *Thus saith the Lord*, and so by Gods blessing will we. Say it, and say it as he says it, by way of Commendation. *Eò quòd*. Make Obedience the cause of our speech, of a set Commendation.

Yet we had best take heed what we do. *Sic dicit Dominus*. His for the *Rechabites*, that shall guide us: And what is't he commends them for?

Because they *Obedied*; for their *Obedience*. But to whom that? *Obedied your Father*; Obedience to man. What was he? Your Father *Jonadab*, saith the Text. What power had he? All. Natural, Civil, Ecclesiastical. *Jonadab* was the Father of their Family; had (1.) *Jus Patrium*, the power of a Father over them. He disposed of their kind of living, their Estates, and Civil affairs; had (2.) *Jus Regium*, the Civil Power over them. Contrived all to a religious course of life, to the freer service of heaven, had (3.) *Jus Ecclesiasticum*, the spiritual power over them.

He hath not more of *Authority* than *They of Obedience*. Obedience *Formal*, to his command. *Universal*, to all. *Punctual*, according to all that he commanded them. This then is the Obedience that God here commends; a *Formal*, an *universal*, a *Punctual* obedience to *Natural*, *Civil*, and *Spiritual* Parents.

Commends them *for*, commends *to us*. Rewards to *them*, will reward to *us*. Likes them so well upon it, that he loves to look upon them for it; will not therefore endure them out of his sight; promises to keep them there for ever; Will do as much for us upon the same performances; passes his word upon it, *Thus saith the Lord*: Engages his *honour*, as he is *Lord*; his *power*, as he is *Lord of Hosts*; his *mercy*, as the *God of Israel*, to make it good.

You see the Text in its full dimensions. It will now fall easily into Parts. Evidently into two:

I. Gods approbation of the *Rechabites* Obedience.

II. And his Reward upon it.

I. In the Approbation you have, (1.) the Form and stile of it, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel*. (2.) The Grounds of it, *Because you have obeyed*, &c. Obedience commended upon some grounds: Commended (1.) from their *Persons*, *Ye, Rechabites, ye*, your wives and your children. *Because ye have obeyed*. (2.) From the *expression of it*, by a *Threefold Act*, *Obedistis, Custodistis, Fecistis*. You have obeyed, kept, and done. (3.) From a *Threefold Object*: The *Commandment* of their Father, *all his Precepts*, and *according to them all*. (4.) From the *Power or Person* whom they obeyed; *Jonadab their Father*.

II. In the Reward, First, for their *Triple Obedience* we shall find a *triple blessing*: (1.) The blessing of a *Posterity* still to succeed them. *Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man. Non deficiet vir de stirpe Jonadab*. (2.) Of an *honourable and pious Posterity*. *Not want a man to stand before me*: such upon whom God will always cast an eye of favour and honour. (3.) Of a *lasting, everlasting Posterity*. *Not want a man for ever*.

Then, secondly, the Certainty and Assurance of it. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel*, and you may take his word, He will perform it.

And

And because we come not hither only to commend others, but to learn our selves; and God therefore sets the *Rechabites* obedience upon record, that we may know what he likes, have a president to follow and do accordingly, we will, in the close of every several point of their obedience, examine our own; see how neer or short we come; where if I chance to say, you have not done so much, pardon me that person all the way; 'Tis the person in the Text, and I therefore use it. I mean not you, nor you, none of you, unless your actions apply it. I know not; If they do, you must forgive me if I strike home. I come not so far to flatter you: and the times require a sharper Physick.

Yet if I may perswade you by the Approbation, Example, or Reward of Obedience in the Text; or the Punishment of disobedience, by the rule of contraries, implied there, I shall so conclude in full desires, that, what God here says of the *Rechabites*, he may hereafter say of you, *Because you have obeyed the Commandment of your Father, and kept his Precepts, and done according to all that he commands; Therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, you shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.*

1. You see my Method. I begin with the Approbation. The stile of it. *Thus saith the Lord.* And that's a good beginning.

And is it God indeed that speaks for Obedience, who is it then that speaks against it? What Spirit are they of? They pretend *St. Pauls*, *Be ye not the servants of men*, [1 Cor. vii. 13.] 'Tis true, that: not so *theirs*, as to forget to be *Christs*. But to remember withal, you are the children of men; some of whom you must obey as Fathers, if you mean to be *Christs* servants. He tells you so, [*St. Mat. xxii. 21.*] *Render to Caesar the things which are Caesars*, as well as *to God the things which are Gods*. He puts *Caesar* first too; to shew they talk vainly, who say they serve God, when they leave out the King. First, thy Father *whom thou hast seen*, then *God whom thou hast not seen*, is the Apostles rule for us to judge by; and his is Gods.

Well then we have God on our side, whoever be against us: Him speaking for it, and speaking of it: and they are words of Commendation, while he so well likes obedience, that he cannot forbear to speak of it.

'Tis no small matter, that, that can command the eye or tongue of the Princes of the earth: It must be more that even forces a Panegyrick from the Lord Almighty; something sure worth Commendation.

Man indeed makes great matters of little or nothing. *God sees not as man sees*. Man may be deceived, God cannot. He says the *Rechabites* have obeyed; commends them for it, say who dare against it. And I am afraid we shall find too many in the upshot, that neither like their obedience, nor Gods commending them; say all they can against it.

'Tis no matter what they say: God doth more than say it; says it with delight; goes with it over and over again; *Obedistis, Custodistis, Fecistis*; thrice in a breath; takes notice of every tittle, fills the whole Chapter, almost every verse with it; loves to speak of it, it so much contents him.

Says it incircled with his glories; talks of it amidst his Hosts; tells *them*, as it were, of it. For he had told *his Prophet* and *his People* of it before. Now he even tells it *his Angels*; would have them take notice of it.

He goes further; almost forsakes his *Israel* to look on them: is now become the God of the *Rechabites*: They are they that shall now stand before him for ever.

He

He goes on still: is so well pleased, that he tells it to themselves; commends them to their faces: a thing not usual with God, but to the very chiefest of his Saints and Children. At least then only when he is most highly pleased with any. *Ye have obeyed.*

Lastly, Says it not in the form his other speeches go, not *dixit*, but *dicat*, in the present. Is still saying it; said it then, and says it still: said it to them, says it to us, that we also might say it after him: Say it in our actions; that he might have some ground to say of us what he does of them, *Ye have obeyed.* Which brings me the Parties into fight, whose Obedience is the ground of all this Approbation. And the first is from their *Persons*.

Ye Rechabites. Every verse almost tells you it. *They, Kenites*, some say, descended from *Jethro: Midianites* by original, strangers from the Covenant; yet even they obedient to their father, taught to be so by the Law of nature; commended for that.

Abulensis is loth to derive them from so poor beginnings. He makes them of the Family of *Caleb*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, the *royal Tribe*; That even *Princes* too, as well as people, might know obedience to their Father sometimes in those commands that seem to divest them of that honour; But that Obedience is the greatest honour; greatest in such persons.

Whether they were such or no, they were the Sons of *Jonadab*: He was a devout man. *Spontaneus Domini*, says *St. Augustine*: One that would serve God, though it were for nothing. Some of our age would have told them, they might have excused them being the seed of the Godly. 'Tis a part of their Commendation that they thought not so.

'Tis another, that they excused neither Age, nor Sex. *Tou: Who?* We, our Wives, our Sons and our Daughters, *ver. 8.* Oh happy Family, where Obedience is thus taught by Authority, learned from Example, suck'd from the breasts; where the Wife learns it from the Husband; hers to him, from him to the Magistrate; the Children from both.

Time, yet, lifts their virtue higher: Three hundred years had *Jonadab* been gathered to his Fathers, while yet his Sons persist in his Commands, with as much constancy as integrity, that we might prescribe no time against Obedience.

This then is the sum of that part of Gods commendation from their *Persons*, that *Rechabites*, *Princes* by their Tribe; *Holy* by descent; *women and children*, after so many ages past over *Jonadab*, neither pleaded their *Descent*, nor their *honour*, nor their *claim to the Covenant*, nor their *Age*, nor their *Sex*, nor the *Abrogation of Laws for Antiquity*, but without any contrary Plea whatsoever generally submitted to all Obedience.

Thus says God for them.

What say we for our selves?

In Civil Affairs, Laws, they say, are Cobwebs. Great men great flies that easily break through them; mean men little enough to slip out at any hole; women do what they please; children are not old enough for any thing, but sin and disobedience.

In Ecclesiasticals it is worse. Though it be a matter of Reverence enjoyn'd to God himself, Great ones are too good, Others too perverse, Women too tender, Children not of age, All too weakly to bend the knee, or bare the head in Gods service: so that what was said of *Moses*, that *God talked with him as man doth with his friend*, I may invert, and say, Man now talks with God, as man doth with his friend; so fellow-like, that,

D d d d though

though our Fathers had not commanded the contrary, all the world would say, There is nothing like Reverence or Obedience in this.

Let me ask now, Had the *Rechabites* the Law of Nature to guide them, and have not we? Were not they a righteous off-spring as well as we? Had not they the tenderness of Wives and Children to plead for weakness of constitution and complexion (greater hinderances to their strict kind of life) as well as we? Could not they have pleaded antiquated Laws, as truly we? Yet says God, *You have done all that was commanded you*: done it, when others have not; not mine own people; he may add now, not my Christian people. Thus our negligence commends their Obedience. We that have no more to excuse our selves than they; not so much, our task being easier, our helps greater, yet we have not, They have. Let that be an addition to their first Commendation, raised a little by comparison with us. *You Rechabites*, I may almost say now, *You only* have obeyed.

I pass now to the second ground of the Approbation: The Expression of their Obedience.

Three Acts there are of it: (1.) *Obedistis*. (2.) *Custodistis*. (3.) *Fecistis*. you have obeyed, kept, and done what was commanded you. The first belongs to the *Inward*, the two other to the *outward* man.

I begin with the *Inward*. For without that, *Outward* Obedience is of short service, no continuance. Four Acts flow from it. To (1.) Hear; to (2.) Hearken; to (3.) Submit to; to (4.) Acquiesce in the Commands of our Superiours. All point blank against those Four grounds of Disobedience, (1.) *Untractableness*, (2.) *Impatience*, (3.) *Pride*, and (4.) *Murmuring*. To *hear*, that against *Untractableness*, that will not so much as endure the hearing. To *hearken*, that against *Impatience*, that will not take pains to hear it out. To *submit*, that against *Pride*, that will veil to none. To *acquiesce* or rest in, that against *murmuring*, that is never content with any thing imposed upon it.

Let me but ponder the word as I go, I shall find all those, and not go from the word.

In all three Languages, the word, whence comes Obedience, comes from Hearing. *In auditu auris obediuit* is King *David's*, *Psal. xviii. 43*. The first duty God ever requires, *Hear O my people*. The *Rechabites* stumble not here. They hear their Father speaking even out of his dust. They are far enough from *Untractableness*, that hear so easily. *Promptitudo Obedientie*; that's the first commendation of their Obedience, the Readiness of it.

Yet he will give you little that will not give you the hearing. The Son in the Gospel that did not mean to go, and the Son that meant not to go, both went thus far, heard their Father: *uñ* signifies more, to attend and listen with a desire to it. How this is, you may understand out of *Psal. xlv. 11*. *Hearken, O daughter, and consider*: Hearken first, then consider, weigh and ponder the words; then *forget thine own people and thy Father's house*, thy kindred and companions, that alliance that uses by a kind of faction to draw too often from obedience; those private and mutual interests, that, under a pretence of obedience, beguile us of it. To *hearken* then is to assent to, in Gods own phrase, [*1 Sam. viii. 9*.] to leave all private relations and intentions, out of the meer desire of Obedience. Thus the *Rechabites* hearkned neither to the tenderness of their Wives, nor the cries of their Children, nor their own commodities and conveniences, to hearken to their Father. This is *Obedientia Patientia*,

Patientia, the Approbation of their Obedience by their Patience.

This is a ready passage to the next, *To submit* their judgments, affections, persons, and estates to the will of their Father. 'Tis a hard Theme; and I had best prove it to be Obedience, before I venture to approve them for it.

The Latine and Greek words [*to obey*] sound nothing more than *sub*, and *under*; *υποτασσεισθε, υποτασσεσθαι, υποταξιν, subditi estote, subijcimini*; the soul it self *under*; that submitted. *Let every soul be subject, Rom. xiii. 1.* As if St. Paul had foreseen the distinction, the Body, not the Soul. The Soul, says he, not the Body alone, and therefore put them in mind of it, *Tit. iii. 1.* As if every body knew it well enough; no, no body were; no body could be ignorant of it, only want one to remember them. *Put them in mind* therefore. Wherefore? We may gather something from the Reason he adds; *For we our selves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts, Tit. iii. 3.* First, foolish, then disobedient; none else are so, how wise soever they think themselves. Yea, and deceived; for just it is that he that will not trust his Superiours judgment (especially, where his own is as well inferiour as himself) should be deceived by himself, or those who have no power over him, but to deceive him. And he that will not obey their will, just it is he should be given up to serve his own lusts. And so they are, mark it when you will, *natural brute beasts*, says St. Peter. None more *sensual, proud, devillish*, so St. James finds them, [*Jam. iii. 15.*] than those that thus proudly cast off the yoke of submission and obedience. Their bodies then and passions scorn to obey them, who by their own disobedience have taught their inferiour powers to rebell. 'Tis no wonder then if that follow in the verse, *Living in malice, envy, hateful, and hating one another.* I need call nothing else but the dismal experience of these last tumultuous, rebellious times to witness it, wherein Tongues, and Pens, and Actions too have so horribly exprest it.

And give me leave a little to reason with you. Authority us'd to be a Logical Argument to guide our reason: and have we lost our *Logick* too, as well as our *Obedience*? The consent of wise, grave, learned Fathers (till you know where to find better) with any man not too high in his own conceit, is certainly of a value somewhat above his private imagination. For, who tells you they are deceived? Your private Minister? And are you sure he is not; and are they deceived? And is it not as likely that you and he should be? Were they not as wise as you? As just as you? As devout as you? Have you reason, and had not they? Do you use Scripture, and did not they? Had they interests, and have not you? That all should be deceived, till you, and your new Ministers came into the World, is morally impossible. That they should purposely deceive you, you have nor ground, nor charity to imagine. To think then that you may not as easily be deceived, does it not look like pride? And is not Pride enough to blind you from seeing truth? 'Tis true, your Governours are not infallible, no more are you. Yet certainly there is more certainty in their united judgments, than your simple fancies. And I am sure many might with less hazard have erred with them (suppose they erred) than sometimes gone right. *That* they might at any time in simplicity of heart; *This* seldom without Faction, Schism, or Pride.

You mistake me all this while, if you suppose I require a *blind Obedience*. No, I know God would not be served with a blind sacrifice. His service is a reasonable service. Clear sighted as you will, but no curious, inquisitive observance. Know you must, if possibly you can, that it is not ill you go about, and the Power just that commands it; But to

enquire into every circumstance, as it is beyond the power of most, so it is more than the duty of any. 'Tis this creates you so many difficulties, suspensions, controversies, till you have lost your reward, your Church and Country the profit of your virtue.

Were the *judgment* thus once submitted, our *affections* would the sooner follow: though they indeed are the cause commonly that we submit not our judgments. Our affections set so strongly upon honours, profits, liberty, pleasure, make us take up opinions to keep them. Yet Nature will tell you thus much, *Partem Patria, partem Parentes*. Your King and Country, and Church too claim a portion in your affections, persons, and estates.

I leave now *de Jure* for *de Facto*, the Justice for the Practice of it: to shew you all this done by the *Rechabites*. How easily else might they have vied reason with their Father? What, drink no Wine? *All Creatures are good; nothing to be refused with thanksgiving*? No Houses neither? Must we thus be made the talk of the world? Turn heirs to *Cain's* malediction? *Vagabonds upon the face of the earth*? Must our Wives and Children too suffer all the hardships of a kind of perpetual banishment? No mercy to be had of our selves, none of them? What, no Lands neither? No earing, nor harvest? Must we leave our Children beggars, our Wives unprovided for, purchase nothing for them? Thus, and more they might have argued; but all these notwithstanding, how harsh soever they conceived it, they rather trusted their Fathers judgment than their own.

But is their *Reason* only submitted, are not their *Affections* too? They neither contend for honour, nor stickle for riches, nor grudge at any inconvenience; but submit their desires to their Fathers; tread under their own natural propensions to obey him. Would he have them drink no Wine? They will not drink, though the Prophet bid them, *ver. 5*. Would he have them poor? They have no Lands. Would he forbid them houses? They will have no abiding place; be everlasting Pilgrims. What would he have them do, that they will not do?

They submit judgments, affections, estates, persons, their own and their Posterities, as much as in them lies, that they may satisfy their Fathers. This, if any thing, is *Obedientis summa humilitas*, the exceeding Humility of their Obedience, with so much approbation so oft reiterated through the Chapter.

They go one step higher. Not only *submit to* his Authority, but *resolve into it*. Make no further Queres upon it, nor murmur at it, but, as the Hebrew root sometimes signifies, *Acquiescitis*, rest fully contented with it. You may call this *Obedientie hilaritas*; Their chearful delight in their Obedience.

Thus far the *Rechabites*, now again to our selves.

And, first, have we heard the King, our Father? Have we not rather, with the deaf Adder, stopped our ears? One with the earth, that's our profit; the other with our tail, that's our pleasures: That we might not hear him, charm'd he never so wisely.

The Fathers of the Church have had less at our hands.

Next, how have you hearkned? Much that way given. Hearkened to find fault, to cavil at, to plot against, to undermine. This hath been the peoples course of late, so to destroy those by whom God would save them. The Civil Magistrate hath not been in much better case.

Your Judgments, they have been submitted too. But to whom? To the factious and discontented decisions (shall I call them, or ravengings rather)

rather) of ignorant and malicious Teachers; who have exercised more tyranny upon your consciences, than the most clamorous can prove ever Bishop did; durst ever accuse him to do: while they thus both belie God, and abuse you, by exacting an infallible assent to their unreasonable, seditious, unchristian frenzies, under the name of the Word of God. Thus while you refuse to submit your judgments, where you are bound, you captivate your reason to them who have lost their own; and are therefore angry that others should have any.

How in the interim you have believed the sincere Declarations of your Sovereign; how submitted to what he thought best or fittest for you: How to the intire intentions of your right Spiritual Fathers, let the general slighting and undervaluing their judgment we hear in every Shop, as we pass along, testify for both.

In a word, how you delight in the Laws and Statutes of State and Church, and rest contented with them, I would the general practice and countenance of Disobedience and Prophaneness did not even *tell it in Gath, and publish it in the streets of Askalon.*

Thus we serve again to exalt the *Rechabites*, while our sins condemn our selves. For while *our* untractableness, Impatience, Pride, and Murmurs banish Obedience, *they* have heard their Father *readily*, hearkened to him *carefully*, submitted *humbly*, and rested *contentedly* in his sole Authority, without the least reluctance or contradiction.

And by the way I may point out the reason: They lived temperate, mean, and humble lives; had no thoughts of raising houses, but in heaven. Now, the riots, riches, pride, and a desire of raising Families have made many of you forget *in Jerusalem*, to keep *under*. Yet let these men take heed, lest, while, with *Corah* and his company, they cry out to *Moses* and *Aaron*, *You take too much upon you*, keep us under, keep us down too much, they go down with that cursed Crue into the Pit. He that will not bear this *in*, keep *under here*, must go *under there*; and better *in* here, *down here*, than *down for ever*.

We have now done with the *Inward* virtue of *Obedience*. Now for the Exercise of it *Outward*. You have obeyed. How shall we know it? As *St. James* of Faith, so we of Obedience. Shew me *that* by thy works. You have obeyed. Have you kept Statutes then? God is the *Rechabites* witness, and the Prophet *Jeremy* is their witness, and the Land of *Israel* is witness that they have.

1. Kept them diligently; obeyed them carefully; even watch'd to keep them: it is the very word that God gives them.

2. Kept them without intermission, kept them all their days, *ver. 3.*

3. Kept them from violence and misconstruction; added no new senses of their own: Kept them, that is, broke them not by subtle distinctions, but *Observantes fecistis*, says *Tremellius*; did it with all observance, and due honour to them; never seem'd to entrench the least upon them by any seeming breach, till fleeing from the *Chaldeans* they entred *Hierusalem*, staid a little till the storm was over, and likely rather pitch'd their Tents there, any where in the streets, or upon the house tops, as the Israelites themselves did at the Feast of Tabernacles, then dwelt in houses.

This kind of keeping Statutes was a doing of them. *Custodistis, Fecistis*. Not that keeping Statutes which some talk of, when they tell us they keep Laws, while they are willing to undergo the penalty it demandeth of them. *St. Paul* certainly was of another mind; *Not only for wrath*, says he, *but Conscience sake*, *Rom. xiii. 4.* Makes Obedience a matter of Conscience,

ence, not of Punishment. Not the Punishment, but Conscience makes up *that*. And, I believe, these men themselves would think it greater Tyranny to exact the Penalties, than the Law. *That* the true Obedience then that doth not keep Laws with the Tongue, but with the Hand. The *doing*, not the *Talking* of Obedience is the *Rechabites* commendation.

Yet, had they liv'd by our later distinctions (for now we are to compare them with our times) they would have told us they obey'd their Fathers, and kept no Precepts; been obedient Sons of the Church, and kept no Canons; Loyal Subjects, and denied *Caesar's* due when they list. All might have been done in spirit; the body and estate saved quite; done enough, to say they were humble and obedient Subjects. Laws too interpreted how we would, to our own ends and purposes. Now this meaning affixed, now that; turn'd and wrung which way we please. This, you know, the ordinary practice of the people of the Age.

But, if this be keeping and doing the commands of our Fathers, it is beyond the wisdom of man to make such Laws which some senseless distinction cannot elude; and then what becomes of all Obedience? Whatever we see among our own people, we see no such matter among the *Rechabites*. Here again God reproves us, while he approves them, and the sincere simplicity of their obedience.

We are now next door to see it fully by what they *did*; what they *kept*; what they *obeyed*. Obeyed *the commandment* of *Jonadab* their Father; kept his *Precepts*; did according to *all* that he commanded them.

The first object of their Obedience is *the Commandment of their Father. His commandment, not their own wills*. It is a usual thing now adays to direct their Governours, what to do, what to teach, what to command; then, forsooth, they will obey them. This is not to obey the Fathers command, but their own wills. And you know how the world went when every one did his own will, *what seem'd good in his own eyes*, Judg. xvii, xviii, and xix. Chapt. Parents then could not keep their goods from the fingers of their own children. *Micah* will steal his mothers money. Men could not keep themselves from violence, nor their Wives from ravishment, nor the Levite his. Men could not keep their own Priest; He is taken away by force. The Priest could not tend his cure; He's fain to wander about, to seek a place to live in, to play the Idols Chaplain in stead of Gods. Pray God it prove not so with us. The King cannot keep the Prerogative of his Crown; *there was no King in Israel*. God cannot keep his own; they liv'd as if there were no God in *Israel*. This the case where every one neglects commands, *to do what is good in his own eyes*; either hath or acknowledgeth no Father to obey but his own arbitrary power. Happy *Rechabites* that obey command, prescribe not; petition not for commands to their Father, but obey theirs, for 'tis *Mandato* in the Singular; as if that singly were the rule of their Obedience, the command of their Father.

Thence 'tis an easie passage to all his precepts. Resign once themselves to his command, they stick at nothing of his Precepts. Interests prevail no longer. *Omnia* is good doctrine then: *Obedience universal. Active* in all just commands; *Passive*, where they are not such. These were just; God would not else reward them for doing them. Will you see what they were?

1. *You shall drink no wine, neither you, nor your Sons for ever*, ver. 6. And it is not likely their fare was dainty. A hard task, you'll say. Measure it by what our days would think of it, wherein we so much study our Palats. How does a little restraint in diet afflict us? What a burthen is it now to be denied excess?

Were

Were it to be denied us for ever, how would we rather die than admit it? A few fish-days trouble us above measure: and it shall go for superstition, rather than not be cried down. How far are we from the sweet temper of their Obedience?

2. Their keeping this first command shews that, the next will shew their courage. *Neither shall ye build houses. The Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Sons of Jonadab have not where to lay their heads,* but in a tatter'd Tent. Many conveniences they must needs want there; suffer many inconveniences, both in their abode, and in their removal. This especially be exceeding troublefom to their Wives and Children; subject in the interim ever and anon to storms and tempests; to be burnt by the heat of the day, and the frost of the night; full every way of trouble, uncertainty, and hazard: yet this they are content with too, to shew the courage of their obedience.

3. Yet to have neither field, nor vineyard, nor seed, nor harvest, nothing to delight in; a kind of common want; nothing to leave their Children, but an hereditary poverty: Thus to give back at no inconveniences; so cheerfully to cast off any superfluities, so continually to trench upon necessities, to renounce all the glories which we place in earthly accommodations, only to obey their Father; I now call you to witness who want nothing of wordly things, whose greatest care it is to digest your pleasures into order, to enjoy your honours and estates, and to dispose them; to keep your selves from being oppress'd with too many enjoyments, whether these valiant *Rechabites* may not yet deserve a third commendation, for the *Constancy of their Obedience*.

This *Omnia*, these all you see expressly kept. If there were more, some lighter Precepts, as certainly there were, *All of them* too; 'tis not *Omnia hæc*, but *Omnia* indefinitely; *All whatsoever were commanded them*.

Their Obedience is yet compleater; not only *All* the Precepts, but *Omnino prout*, just according to them. Not all for *Substance* only, but all for *Circumstance* too. Omitted not a Ceremony. God, as he loves not blind, so, loves not lame Sacrifices, nor blemished. And if it once be arbitrary for any one to neglect a Ceremony, to dispute an inconvenience, *perit obedientia*; farewell Obedience. *According to all* was the *Rechabites*; was good doctrine then; hath been ever since, till these unhappy days. And they gain'd by the hand Gods Approbation of the *Punctuality* of their Obedience. They fail'd not in a tittle; no more must we, if we look either to *Dicit Dominus*, what he says, or what he commends, And he truly is commended, not whom men, but whom the Lord commendeth.

But though God said it, and commended them for it, now we draw it home, we had best prove it good.

1. 'Tis that, then, which God requires of your *Children* to you: *Children obey your Parents in all things*, Col. iii. 20. Of your *Servants*: *Servants obey your Masters in all things*, ver. 22. Of all *Subjects*: *to every ordinance of man*, 1 Pet. ii. 13.

Indeed, so it may be, that the Ordinances are not just. If so, then, if the power be, you have a *Passive* obedience to supply you. Submit willingly to the *Punishment*, but do you *must not*. All other must be done.

Yet, I must confess, while we dispute how far our Governours are to be obey'd, in what, whether God or man, it oft comes to pass we obey neither. That God must be obeyed, not man when he commands an evil, is too plain to make a question.

But this is a true Rule too: Unless you are certain 'tis truly evil you are commanded,

commanded, you ought to obey. If you be only doubtful, I should think in reason, as you would answer God for doing your uttermost, you should more rely upon his wisdom, under whose command you are, than on your own, or any private engaged judgment. Especially, if it seem to carry any thing that contradicts your private liberty or interests; in which case we are seldom competent judges.

If indeed you are fully certain of his ignorance, or general indisposition to all honesty and goodness whom you are to obey, you are not debarred from better counsel: but the surest (and that you ought to look to) is men of the like authority and condition, (at least of no known contrary resolve, no private, discontented, engaged affections of whose wisdom, and honesty, and care too of your souls you are as justly confident, as of the others malice and indiscretion.

Else I cannot tell you but any other may as well misguide your private respects, as much mislead both them and you, and you be left with less excuse. Whereas the condition that God hath set you in, the authority under which [and in that the gift of Government (for certainly such a thing there is) which may be excellent sometimes in the worst men] may plead something for you at your last Account.

You may pretend liberty, but they that *promise you it* by Disobedience are *themselves the servants of corruption*, 1 Pet. ii. 19. You may pretend Conscience, but it will prove Pride. And does it not appear so? For while you determine that in something you must, in other you may chuse, is it not as if you thought you only knew what were best? Your Fathers, they, old doting fools. You pretend wisdom; but every Ordinance, says *S Peter*, is, for no other cause, for that he gives, *ver. 11. to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*: They only are against it. And there are, too, that pretend the Spirit; These are they that go so far upon their own heads, that at last *they separate themselves*: and what are they for it? *Sensual, having not the Spirit*, says *St. Jude*, *ver. 19*. Where's now the Spirit you so much boast of?

All Precepts therefore must be our Rule to walk by. All, though harsh and hard ones. All; and more than All sometimes, more than Law will give them. *Ne offendamus*, is Christs Rule; *lest we should offend them*. Them and others, too, by teaching them by our example at other times to disobey.

St. Paul stretcheth it further, *Dicto obedire*, *Tit. iii. 1*. To obey at a word speaking: a command by word of mouth, when it is not express Law. For, when all is done, something will still be left to the interpretation of the Lawgiver, in the breast of the Judge, to which we must submit.

We are not yet at the uttermost: All is not enough, unless our Obedience be according to all; *Omnino prout*, says *Tremellius*: just as they would have it to a tittle; in every circumstance.

You find this requisite in your several Corporations; where the omission of a punctilio draws after it intolerable defaults. The hedge is easily passed through, where but one bush is wound aside; and the breach of one Circumstance is but the disposition to another. Things that in themselves seem of no considerable moment within a while appear considerable by the neglect: As the error that appears not at the first declining Line of the workman a while after manifests an irrecoverable deformity. According to all, that's the surest Rule to go by. You know it your selves in your own Corporations: You know it in your own Families, if you know any thing. *Give an inch, they'll take an ell*, is your own Proverb. And cannot you judge as equally for the Church? I am

I am sure not there ; where had this Rule been kept, we had never met these distracted times. But so long have some omitted *this*, some *that*, that all at last is thought Innovation. One likes not this, another not that, another not something else ; so 'tis come at last they like nothing. Rubricks and Canons have been so long plaid with to please the people, or I know not who, that nothing but the ruine of the whole will now content them. I would we saw it not by the misery of these (however some call them) truly sad, distressed times.

Yet take this Caution with you ; *Qua praecepit*: Not according to every humour, what this or that man fancies decent, but according to all that is *commanded*.

Now Two things there are which have the force of Precepts ; Laws and Customs.

1. Laws ; and they according to the *Letter*, not the equity ; that's for no private power to go by. A Priviledge indeed sometimes for the Supreme Law-giver and the Judge.

2. Customs ; that they bind like Laws and Precepts, you all tell us in your Tenures, in your Lands, in your Corporations. How comes it about they do not in the Church ? I am sure you plead them on all sides strong enough against it.

And has the Church none ; Or hath it none to plead ? Yes, both. It was St. Paul's Plea ; no meaner mans : *we have no such Custom, nor the Churches of God*, 1 Cor.xi.16. Many indecencies were then crept into the Church of *Corinth* ; about *Prayers*, about *Preaching*, about *Sacraments*, about *Gestures* and *Ceremonies*. The Rule that he confutes them by is, They had *no such*, nor the Churches of God ; The contrary then they had : and that he thought conviction enough for Christians ; yea, for the contentious too. *If any man be contentious*, will hear no reason, this the way to answer him.

'Twas so then ; 'tis so still : They, the Apostles, and the Churches of God, Customs they had, and made this use of them ; so may we ; Customs we have, and we may plead them.

Some deriv'd from them ; so high : others later, yet of age enough to speak for themselves. Such as, only directing all into order and beauty, stood still unquestioned, till of late a subtle prophaneness creeping in, under a pretence of Law, though obeying none, would fain accuse for illegal Tyrannies.

But let me argue it with this kind of man. May not I as lawfully serve my God in a reverent posture, as thou in a sawcy and irreverent garb ? Is it Superstition in me to stand, because thou fittest or leanest on thy elbow ? Is it Idolatry in me to kneel, because thou wilt not foul thy clothes, or vex thy knees ? Strange must it needs be, that sitting, leaning, lolling must be Law and Canon, where no set behaviour is expressed, and my reverence only be against it ; made Innovation which Law never forbad, Custom has retain'd. When you can bring me Law against my standing, bowing, kneeling, which your selves know Custom hath observed, where uniform order has been kept, I shall either submit, or answer. Else I must ask by what Law I am bound to sit or lean, and not to stand, or kneel, or bow ? though I urge thee only to Charity and Reverence.

This for some reverent Customs, which hadst thou any equal to, for age or reason in thy Civil Affairs, thou wouldst plead against the Law.

I here only wish it, where there is nought against them, that they may stand still, if not under the notion of obedience, yet far enough from Innovation or Disobedience. And, I believe, in cold blood it would be found so,

Well now: *All*, for the *matter*, though never so hard. *According* to all, for the *manner*, though never so troublesome and inconvenient; if commanded by good *Law* or *Custom* must be the compass of your Obedience. *If any man teach otherwise*, says St. Paul; Otherwise? Than what? Than all honour, that is, obedience in all things: What then? *He is proud, knowing nothing*, how much soever he seems to know, *dotting about questions and strife of words*, whence cometh envy, *strife, railings, evil surmises, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness*. You see the times, and you may see the place, 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4, 5.

How these rules have been kept amongst you towards the command of your King and Church, I leave to the scrutiny of your own bosoms: If you find it otherwise, as surely you will, let it be mended, or get St. Paul and St. Peter made *Apocrypha*, and scrape out *Dicit Dominus* here, Gods Approbation of the *Rechabites* for observing *all*, for doing *all*.

I have been so long about our selves, I had almost forgotten them. But I return, and now enquire upon their last Commendation; *whom they obeyed; Jonadab their Father*. Their *Father* by *nature*; He from whose loyns they descended. Their *Civil Father* and Prince; He that had power over their estates; so it appears by his ordering their temporal affairs, their new kind of Common-wealth. Their *Spiritual Father* by his Decrees disposing all for the freer exercise of their Piety and Religion. By commanding abstinence from wine, and the delights of sense, to refine their understandings for heavenly thoughts; by forbidding them houses, putting them in mind of better dwellings; by the oft removal of their Tents to keep them in continual thoughts they had here no abiding City; by a voluntary resignation of all earthly accommodations to teach them the contempt of worldly things; a total vacancy to their Religion and Order.

So you have them here, lastly, commended for three kinds of Obedience to three kinds of Fathers; their *Natural, Civil, Ecclesiastical Father*, which is the right directing their Obedience.

Yet I meet here Three other Commendations from the words, *Your Father*.

1. That they obeyed their *right Father; Your Father*. Sought them out no new ones, neither in Church nor State. Kept, as you would say, to their own King, to their own Bishop, their own Priest; wandred not out of their Diocess, gadded not out of their own Parish, to find one of their own choosing.

2. That they acknowledged him for a *Father*, and *so used him, with all honour and respect*; not a word against him for all the difficulties of his Injunctions.

3. That they obeyed him, *under that name*, because a *Father*, upon no other ground, though he was but one man. This indeed is that which formally constitutes Obedience, when we do any thing for no other reason, but *because commanded by our Father*. To do it for other ends, for the justice, equity, or goodness of it may bring it under the title of some other virtue; This only, because commanded by our Father, makes it Obedience.

You

You have seen the last part of the *Rechabites* Obedience. Shall we see whether you have any better luck in this than in the rest? Whether you can here say any thing for your selves, that you have obeyed the command of your Father?

Yet we must see, first, what Fathers we acknowledge: take heed we are right, lest God answer us as he answered those by the Prophet, *Ye have set up Kings, but not by me. Ye have made Princes, but I knew it not,* Hof.viii.4.

To begin then right. Kings, they are our Fathers, *καὶ ἰεῖς* *Nursing Fathers*. God hath set them over us, *Prov.viii.15. Per me Reges*. Made them Supreme too; 'tis St. *Peters*, 1 Pet.ii.13. *To the King, as Supreme*. Mark that: No earthly Power above him; nor Pope, nor People. Be not we fallen into strange times, in the interim, that God must be driven to recant, and we learn a new Supremacy? The Kings Preeminence is expressly a part of your Oath of Allegiance. And for the Oath of God, says *Solomon*, Ecclef. viii.2. so think of him, so obey him.

Next to him those that are sent by him, says St. *Peter*: of no bodies sending else, of whose soevers choosing: not so properly Fathers, as hands and fingers of that great Father, *Pater Patria*. Those to govern under him, not above him, so we pray in our *Common Service*.

Every Magistrate, that is, every Governour of a Country; every Maior of a City; every Master of a Company; every Father of a Family: Some of these have their Statutes to be kept; all of them their commands to be obeyed.

These are Secular Powers, you have besides Spiritual; such as take order for your Souls, as the other for your Bodies, and Estates, your Bishops and Clergy.

Bishops are Fathers by their Title, the Fathers of the Church; so the first Christians, so all since, till this new unchristian Christianity started up. Fathers in God, 'tis their stile; however some of late, Sons of *Belial*, would make them Fathers in the Devil, Antichrists: perhaps, that they might make them like themselves. Strange Antichrists to whom Christ hath left the Governing of his Church these 1500 years!

1. If you value them by their *Antiquity*, they are Fathers for that; *their enemies being judges*; who would fain distinguish between their Offices and their Names, that they might have some pretence to disobey them; though more commonly they fill their mouth with scoffs and calumnies, the language of the Devil, than their books with the language of Antiquity truly understood.

2. Fathers, secondly, for their *Authority*. Time was when their Commands, their Councils, and Canons were Laws to Christians; none of the least neither, when their breach inferred the greatest punishment, *spiritual malediction*.

3. Fathers, lastly, for their tenderest *Care* over the tenderest part, your Consciences. Such who would quickly set all in order, would you not listen too engagedly to by-respects. Such whose commands you cannot complain of, when you have examined them. A hat, a knee, a reverent posture of the body, are no such tyrannies, as some please to fancy them. You would do more in a great mans presence, more for a small temporal encouragement. A habit, a Hood, a Cap, a Surplice, a Name, are wonderful things to trouble a devout Conscience. You have more Ceremonies in your Companies and Corporations, and

you observe them strictly. You will find it, if you compare them.

If thus Fathers now, their Precepts then certainly are to be obeyed. Yet with this Rule ever both for them and all other inferiour Magistrates beside; So far as they contradict not the Supreme Authority. 'Tis a rule in natural reason, *In two contrary commands the Superiours is to be obeyed.* Now, *to the King as Supreme*, we told you out of *St. Peter*, *to Rulers as sent by him*; that is, as far as they are sent by him; no further; no further than their Commission from him. Else Obedience can find no bounds; nor Consciences no rest, if the Supreme be not enough to terminate and guide all obedience into *Your Father*.

There is an argument in that word may make you obey him above all the world besides. The tenderness of a Father. Never could any challenge this name with greater justice; never any so far condescended to his children: to part with his own privileges, maintenance, conveniences, provision, attendance: He hath done as much for his Sons, as the *Rechabites* for their Father; left all, even his houses for them, lest, by the insolence of some tumultuous spirits, he should be forced to punish them. What natural Father like this Father?

But whether he hath been used like a Father (indeed you used him lately in your entertainment like a Conqueror, and are justly honoured for it, but whether by others like a Father) let the affronts at his own Palace gate, the sawcy Language in every rascal mouth, the rebellious Sermons, the seditious Libels cast abroad, his own words, where he is fain to proclaim to the world He is driven from you, let these speak; I say nothing.

Your Inferiour Magistrates have almost every where found disrespect. And whether your Bishops and Clergy have been used like Fathers, if the usage they have had of late, the tumults about their houses, the riots upon their Persons, the daily insolencies the whole Clergy have met with in your streets, never seen till now in a Civil Common-wealth, in any ordered City upon the most contemptible men, if the injuries done their Persons in the Churches, at the very Altars, once Sanctuaries against violence, now thought the fittest places for it, in the very administration of the Sacraments, in their Pulpits, both among you and abroad the Kingdom: in a word, so many slanderous, malicious accusations without ground, entertain'd with pleasure, besides the blasphemies upon the whole Order, if these cannot tell you, after-ages will determine, and in the interim let the world judge.

Our Fathers imperfections are not to be divulg'd, though true; much less false ones to be imposed upon them. This is a reverence but due to Fathers. 'Twas cursedly done of *Cham*, and he paid for it, he and his with an everlasting curse, to uncover his Fathers nakedness. 'Twas wretchedly done of *Abalom* to tell the people there was no man deputed of the King to hear them, no justice in the Land; and he thrived accordingly. And let all the enemies of my Lord the King be as that young man is, says *Cushi*.

Yet say we, 'twere well it were no worse. How is all this made Religion too? Oaths and Protestations (intended certainly to better purposes) abused to maintain rebellion and prophaneness. Construed so in Pulpits, and professed by their Scholars in the face of God and man; pray God it go no higher: and dare you after all this look for a blessing?

Alas!

Alas ! you must lay by those thoughts till you have learned the *Rechabites* Lesson. They used their *Jonadab* like a Father ; so revered his memory, so preserved his name, so obeyed him in all his several authorities, so punctually, so constantly, so courageously, so sweetly, so universally, so sincerely, so really, so carefully, with that contentedness without grumbling, that humility without disputing, that patience, that readiness, that full content of every Age, Sex, and Condition, no weakness, tenderness, or priviledges pretended against it, that God himself presently upon it promiseth a full reward. *Therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, &c.*

I am now at the Reward ; and 'tis a full one ; full of (1.) honour, full of (2.) proportions, full of (3.) blessings.

Full of (1.) honour at the first ; *Therefore, thus---* as if their Obedience deserved it, or God at least would seem so far to honour it. He had promised length of life, in the Commandment, for it : and God is not unjust. It deserves therefore by the Covenant of his Promise, yet by the interpretation of his mercy.

And (2.) full of proportions it is. Proportionable to the *three* Acts and Objects of Obedience. You have obeyed your Father ; therefore you shall want no Sons ; there's one. You have kept his commandments ; therefore shall your Sons stand in them, and by standing in them, stand before God ; there's a second. You have kept all, and done according to all, that hath been commanded you, fail'd in nothing ; therefore shall you have a reward, all of you ; not a man of you fail for ever. This last, indeed, is beyond proportion ; eternity for time ; all blessings for a few Precepts ; the wine of Angels, for abstinence from the bloud of the Vine ; for want of houses upon earth, eternal dwellings in the heavens.

You see the Reward is full of blessings. I shall observe their triple proportion in running over them.

1. Such then, first, is the Reward of their Obedience, that it lengthens days. The world thinks it shortens them, if by it you take away any thing from your flesh, bate any thing of your diet, either in quantity or quality, when the King or Church commands to do so. 'Twas not so here, and without doubt it is not. Obedience hath the promise of length of days, in the Commandment. 'Twas the reason that *Jonadab* gave his Sons to obey him, *ver. 7. That you may live many days.* It was a blessing of long days upon themselves. That's the First.

But it ends not so. Upon their children too ; reaches to them, is a blessing of succession. This is to live beyond our selves, to sprout afresh out of the dust, to have posterity.

And a Posterity that shall not fail, wither, or crumble away, that's more.

If it be a male succession, 'tis more still. *Non deficiet vir* ; not a man fail you. Female generations lose the name ; and so the succession fails even while it lasts.

It does almost so, when it passeth into a collateral line. This fails not that way neither. 'Not *vir de stirpe* ; it continues in a direct line from the root.

Tremellius's Translation sets it higher. *Non excindetur vir.* Of all this Progeny there shall not so much as a man be cut off. Die they must by the necessity of nature : but not a man cut off by violence : that, however it far'd with the captive Jews in *Babylon*, not any of these should fail there, but return to their Tents in peace ; that a fair and even succession it should

should be, that after many days pass on calmly and quietly to their Fathers tombs; in peace gathered to their Fathers.

'Tis well this; such a blessing upon Posterity. But when not only succeeding generations participate the blessing, but *Jonadab* and his Father *Rechab* too, passed Ancestors receive a new accession of glory by it, this is a blessing not upon the Sons only, but upon deceased Fathers too. And all this you may look for upon the like obedience. A long life, a lasting, a continued, a male, a lineal, an unblemish'd Posterity; all redounding back again to your own glory. This the first proportion; that which is given for your Obedience to your Father.

2. The second is greater, *stans in conspectu*; a Posterity high enough to be seen, placed in the eye of the world: men famous and renowned in their Generations. This is but to stand on high before the Kings and Princes of the earth. *In conspectu meo* is higher: that stands before God; a Posterity as virtuous as honourable.

Stand before him; and in place near him: near his Sanctuary, the place of his presence; plac'd there, so it seems, 1 *Chron. ii. 5*.

Placed on high, and near him; as near as the title of Gods can make them: made Judges of the earth; so *stare in conspectu* is sometimes interpreted. This is a second proportion answering to their obedience to commands: They shall be Commanders. Under command they kept, now they are above it; above the people, equal with the Princes of the earth. A famous, a pious, an honourable Posterity, the second reward of Obedience.

3. All this is much, exceeding much. Yet honour and virtue are created things; and therefore mutable, may fail at last: Theirs shall not. *Stans in conspectu*. In honour they shall be, and in honour they shall stand. In virtue they shall be, and in virtue they shall stand; standing is a posture of continuance.

Stand; and stand in his sight, dear as the apple of his eye. That must not be touched; no more must they: and then nothing can change them to be sure.

Cunctis diebus puts all out of question. They shall stand so all their days, says the Text. What speak I of days? Stand so for ever; continue ever; Christians succeed into their order and obedience; they survive into Christians; live in them for ever.

When succession shall have done, successive motions have their periods, and all days shall have an end, yet then *Jonadab* shall not want a man to stand then before him, and see his face for ever. This is indeed the last Reward, a firm, a perpetual, an eternal succession.

And now we are come up to the tops of the Mountains, the everlasting hills. Eternity is a Circle; and there we wind about in everlasting rounds. There we turn about to the beginning of the verse, the Lord speaking and confirming all; that so the certainty may embrace with the eternity. That you may see I tell you no more than God himself will make good, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel*.

He hath promised it, and shall he not bring it to pass? He has said it, and shall it not be done? Said it by his Prophet: and Prophecie, though it sometime wants light, yet never certainty. He engageth his honour, *Thus saith the Lord*: Kings will not fail upon the word of their honour.

He

He engageth his power, *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts*; he that doth what he will in heaven and earth.

He engageth his goodness, his tried, experienced goodness. *Thus saith the God of Israel*; their God, who can witness he never broke his promise, nor fail'd his word.

But doth God take care only for the *Rechabites*? Or says he it for your sake too? For yours also, doubtless; 'tis the Reward of Obedience, where ere it is found, as it is in the Text. Will you give me leave to enquire?

Has the King at any time commanded some of your superfluities, and has he obtain'd them? have you been content to part with any of your delights, in diet, apparel, in your houses, to endure some abridgments to obey him, to supply him?

Have the Inferiour Magistrates demanded the execution of the Laws, and have you assisted them?

Has the Church required your presence, your order and assistance (for I speak not now of your private Fathers) and can you say with these *Rechabites*, *we have obeyed and kept all their Precepts, and done according to all that hath been commanded us*? Then, and not till then, dare I warrant you, *You and your seed shall stand before him for ever*.

For it is not a Reward only to private and personal obedience, but the obedience of Cities, of Nations, too. Obedient Cities and Kingdoms as well as Families shall not want men to stand before him for ever; but disobedient and rebellious shall.

For Kingdoms, Cities, and Countries have their fates; and, when they have rent this bond of union, that kept them to their head, they must expect their Funerals. You then to look to it. Remember that of the Prophet, *How is the faithful City become a harlot*? Isa. i. 21. *Et quàm facta est desolata*? How is she become desolate? Remember that; What becomes of her for it?

I have done with the *Rechabites* obedience, and Gods *dicit* to it. I come nearer home! and I cannot tell you but I must change my phrase into *dicit homo*; Men talk abroad there's no such matter here.

If it be otherwise, you have the better on't. And I shall say no more than what *Jotham*, *Judg.* ix. 19, 20. to the men of *Shechem*, when they had made *Abimelech* King. *If you have then dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal, and with his house this day; then rejoyce you in Abimelech, and let him rejoyce in you: But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech*. I will not say so much with an imprecation; but thus, If you have now dealt truly and sincerely with King and Church, in setting up your own profits, priviledges, and humours to reign over you, by preferring them before their Precepts, then rejoyce you in them, and may they prosper with you. But, if not, fire will come out of them, those very Priviledges and profits, and devour you; and fire will come out from you to devour and ruine them, as sure as you thought once to be happy by them.

'Tis true, and I think I may justly quit some of you before God and man; say for you, *You have obeyed*: but as it is enough for the whole man to be thought guilty, when only one part sins, so it is enough for a punishment upon a Kingdom, that there be among us those, though hands and feet, that disobey.

Though

Though make no doubt of it you who have obeyed, but however the world look on you (as certainly it looks but scurvily upon such) God from above will one day see it and reward it, give you the blessing of the Text. His word is past ; go on and believe *there shall not want a man of your seed to stand before him for ever.*

You are not all then of the same practices. I shall but mind you therefore of my Text in a double sense ; as it implies the punishment of Disobedience ; as it expresses the reward of obedience ; and I have done.

The *Rechabites* that obeyed shall want no length of days, no posterity, nor they no heavenly grace or honour : You will thence infer, They that do not shall want all.

And have they not so in all generations ? What got *Jannes* and *Jambres* by withstanding *Moses*, but *non precedent ultra* ; they should proceed no further, neither in their Projects, nor in their Posterity ? *1 Tim. iii. 8.* What got *Korah* and his company by rising up against *Moses* and *Aaron*, but a death that amazes us to read of ? *They, and their wives, and their children went down quick into hell.* The grave was not low enough, nor could they die soon enough to receive their punishment. What got *Absalom* by his rebellion, but an ignominious cruel death in the heat and fervor of his sin, and no Posterity to survive him ? What got *the Ten Tribes* by their discession in matter of Taxes, but the loss of their Religion and their God ; a perpetual successive Idolatry, and a thousand calamities ? No *in conspectu meo* left them, *that*, Gods presence taken from them for ever. Lastly, What got *Judas* that rose in the days of the Tribute (all upon fair pretences, you see, with the people) but *Ipse periit, & omnes dispersi* ; he perished, the rest made rogues and runnagates upon the face of the earth ?

And can we after all this look for better success either in Church or State, when we rise up against them both ? Any thing but an utter desolation ? Lay it home : *Non deficiet* in the Text will prove *deficiet* here ; nor Posterity, nor Honour, nor Government, nor Religion continue with you.

The very setting light by our Superiours has brought a doom somewhat like it. *Michol* scoffing at King *David* had no child for ever, lost *vir de stirpe*. The little Children, that did but taunt the Prophet as he passed by, were at *deficiet* streight in their childhood, could go no farther. The very savage Bears out of the wilderness rebuked the incivility of the children. If children found so sharp a punishment, what may men expect ? In a word, God, the God of mercies, who holds out beyond our hopes or thoughts, could hold out no longer, when they came once to *despise his Ministers*, *2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.*

And let me tell you too : You shall find it home in your own bosoms, be paid in kind, in your children and servants. For with what face can you expect obedience from your children, who disobey by your example ? How can you but expect rebellion from them, who see you in all your actions resolute to disobey ? Where should they learn it ? From your example ? Alas ! they cannot : You obey nor spiritual nor temporal Fathers. From your words ? They will not ; because your actions contradict them. From Gods commandments ? Why do not you ? Thus while you study by disobedient practices to stand, you and yours fall down for ever.

But I dwell too long upon so harsh a Theme. I shall lead you to Obedience by sweeter thoughts, by *Example*, by *Reward*.

By *Example* : shall these *Rechabites*, their wives and children give aside at no inconvenience, and must we *Christians* startle at every thing, that is

not

not just as we would have it? Shall they hear, and hearken, and submit, and rest upon their Fathers will, and must we alway prefer our own, scarce read or mind a command which we first prescribe not? Shall they fail in nothing, not a circumstance, do according unto all? And are not we ashamed to question all so long till we do nothing? I appeal to your selves. Would you be so used in your own houses? Have your commands disputed, questioned, denied, done by parts and pieces, by your children and servants? With what conscience then can you deal so with your Superiours? *Do as you would be done by*, is the Law of *Nature*. Out of this only Principle 'tis probable the *Rechabites* at first obeyed; in one man, the Carnal, Spiritual, Temporal Authority: and does our *Christianity* serve us to no better use than to condemn them?

If *Example* will not, will *Reward* prevail? 'Tis a Reward to be approved by God. But he rewards us not with words. What would you have?

Your City, your Companies, your own Families cannot subsist without obedience; and can you desire it of others, when you will not pay it your selves? This the way to keep your City from destruction. You labour for succession; this is Gods way to obtain it. You travel for Lands and riches; this is his means to gain and keep them. You desire honours; thus you may have for you and your Posterities. You strive for Privileges; they are surest obtain'd and held by Obedience. You endeavour all for perpetuities; here you may find all for ever. You study to make all as sure as you can; Gods Promise is the best assurance: and here it is: Do what he here commands, and you shall not fear what man can do unto you: *The Lord of Hosts is on your side*.

Else I cannot but tell you, All may fail you. The wine and delicates you eat and drink; the houses and stately Palaces you Lord it in; the Lands and Possessions, the Riches, State and Pomp you have to this day triumphed in; your Wives and Children; all, you think so everlastingly to enjoy by rising up so much to defend them, may in a moment vanish, and your high flown thoughts die before you. You have no assurance from heaven so to settle your estates and fortunes; no *Dicit Dominus* for that. This is only Gods way for thriving, by Obedience.

Nay, and the Religion, you so much seem to contend for, against Innovations, by the greatest Innovations in Church and State, tumults, riots, and prophanest usages, that also will for ever fail you. You want men to stand before God for ever; and instead of them find men to stand before you; *Micah's* Levites; do what seems good in your sight not in Gods; so stand before you, as to hinder you from standing before God; stand in your sight, and blind you from seeing the right way to heaven. Thus you will want your old honours profits, liberties, Religion, all.

But, if you will return, and hear, and hearken, and submit to your ancient Fathers, your King and Church, your Magistrates, and Clergy, observe, and keep, and do your ancient Laws and Customs, I dare warrant you, what God promises to the *Rechabites*, he shall perform to you.

Your City shall flourish, your places be renowned, your Liberties encrease, your persons rise up in honour, your estates prosper, your affairs succeed, your children be famous, your Posterity happy, your Religion display the glories of her first primitive purity, and all go on successfully for ever.

F f f f

And

And when *this Ever* shall have swallowed up the days of time, you shall *stand* still, immovable, immortal, glorious before him, in whose sight is the fulness of joy, where you shall one day meet your Children, and stand all together: Kings and Subjects, Priests and People, Fathers and Children, before your heavenly Father; see him face to face in the beatifical vision for ever and ever.

To which He bring us through his eternal Son, who was obedient unto death to teach us obedience of life unto life, *Jesus Christ*, to which Two Persons, with the Holy Ghost, be all Praise, and Glory, Obedience, and Worship for evermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.

A Table of the Texts of Scripture handled in the fore-going *SERMONS*.

- A** Sermon on the First Sunday in *Advent*, Folio i
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St. M A R K i. 3.
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- A Sermon on the Third Sunday in *Advent*, 23
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- The First Sermon on *Christmas-Day*, 45
I S A. xi. 10.
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- The Second Sermon on *Christmas-Day*, 53
St. L U K E xi. 7.
And she brought forth her First-born Son, and wrapped him in Swadling-clothes, and laid him in a Manger; because there was no room for them in the Inn.
- The Third Sermon on *Christmas-Day*, 63
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And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.
- The Fourth Sermon on *Christmas-Day*. 73
I T I M. i. 15.
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- The Fifth Sermon on *Christmas-Day*, 85
P S A L. xlv. 3.
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- The Sixth Sermon on *Christmas-Day*. Folio 97
St. L U K E i. 68, 69.
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- The Seventh Sermon on *Christmas-Day*, 109
2 C O R. viii. 9.
For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your
sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.
- The Eighth Sermon on *Christmas-Day*. 119
P S A L. viii. 4, 5.
What is man that thou art mindful of him? And the Son of man that thou visitest
him?
Thou madest him lower than the Angels to crown him with glory and worship.
- The Ninth Sermon on *Christmas-Day*, 129
St. L U K E ii. 30, 31, 32.
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.
Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.
A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.
- A Sermon on *St. Stephens Day*, 143
A C T S vii. 55, 56.
But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the
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And said, Behold I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right
hand of God.
- A Sermon on *Innocents Day*, 151
St. M A T. ii. 16.
Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding
wroth, and sent forth and slew all the Children that were in Bethlehem, and
in all the Coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time
which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.
- The First Sermon on the *Circumcision*, 163
2 C O R. v. 17.
Old things are past away, behold all things are become new.
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St. L U K E ii. 21.
—— His Name was called Jesus. ——
- The First Sermon on the *Epiphany*, 182
St. M A T. ii. 11.
And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary his
Mother, and fell down and worshipped him; and when they had opened their
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- The Second Sermon on the *Epiphany*, 192
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- The Third Sermon on the Epiphany, Folio 202
St. MAT. ii. 11.
And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary his Mother, and fell down and worshipped him; and when they had opened their Treasures, they presented unto him gifts, Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrhe.
- A Sermon upon St. Paul's Day : Preached at St. Pauls, 213
NEHEM. xiii. 14.
Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the Offices thereof.
- The First Sermon on the Day of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, 226
St. LUKE ii. 27, 28.
— And when the Parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the Law.
Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God.
- The Second Sermon on the Day of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, 239
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Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God.
- A Sermon on the First Sunday in Lent, 250
2 COR. vi. 3.
— Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of Salvation.
- A Sermon on the Second Sunday in Lent, 263
I COR. ix. 27.
But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.
- A Sermon on the Third Sunday in Lent, 276
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What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.
- A Sermon on the Fourth Sunday in Lent, 286
I COR. ix. 24.
— So run that you may obtain.
- A Sermon on the Fifth Sunday in Lent, 296
I COR. ix. 25.
And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an incorruptible.
- A Sermon on the Sixth Sunday in Lent, 305
DEUT. xxxii. 29.
O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!
- A Sermon on the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary, 317
St. LUKE i. 28.
And the Angel came in unto her, and said, Hail thou that art highly favoured, The Lord is with thee, Blessed art thou among women.

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A Sermon on *Palm Sunday*.

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S. MAT. xxi. 8.

And a very great multitude spread their Garments in the way, others cut down branches from the Trees, and strewed them in the way.

A Sermon upon *Good Friday*.

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I COR. ii. 2.

For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

The First Sermon upon *Easter Day*.

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St. LUKE xxiv. 4, 5, 6.

And it came to pass as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining Garments.

And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, why seek ye the living among the dead?

He is not here, but is risen.

The Second Sermon upon *Easter Day*,

359

St. MAT. xxvii. 52, 53.

And the Graves were opened, and many bodies of Saints which slept arose.

And came out of the Graves after his Resurrection, and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many.

The Third Sermon upon *Easter Day*,

369

PSAL. cxviii. 24.

This is the Day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoyce and be glad in it.

The Fourth Sermon upon *Easter Day*,

379

St. MAT. xxviii. 5, 6.

And the Angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye, for I know that ye seek Jesus which was crucified.

He is not here, for he is risen as he said, Come see the place where the Lord lay.

The Fifth Sermon upon *Easter Day*,

392

I COR. xv. 19.

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

A Sermon upon *Ascension Day*.

408

PSAL. xxiv. 3, 4.

who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand up in his holy place? Even he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart, and hath not lift up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbour.

The First Sermon upon *Whitsunday*,

416

St. JOHN iii. 8.

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou bearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit.

The Second Sermon upon *Whitsunday*,

427

St. JOHN xvi. 13.

Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.

The

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The Third Sermon upon *whitsunday*,

Folio 443

St. JOHN xvi. 13.

Howbeit when He the Spirit of Truth is come] *He will guide you into all truth.*

The Fourth Sermon upon *whitsunday*,

453

ACTS ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sate upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

The Fifth Sermon upon *whitsunday*,

463

ACTS ii. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sate upon each of them,

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

A Sermon upon *Trinity Sunday*,

473

REV. iv. 8.

— *And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God, Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

The First Sermon upon the Calling of St. Peter,

481

St. LUKE v. 8.

— *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*

The Second Sermon upon the Calling of St. Peter.

491

St. LUKE v. 5.

— *Master, we have toyled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.*

A Sermon upon the *Transfiguration*,

504

St. LUKE ix. 33.

And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three Tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; not knowing what he said.

The First Sermon upon *All Saints*,

516

PSAL. cxlix. 9.

— *Such honour have all his Saints.*

The

The Table.

The Second Sermon upon *All Saints*,

Folio 526

HEB. xii. 1.

wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race which is set before us.

A Sermon upon St. Andrews Day,

542

ST. MAT. iv. 20.

And they straightway left their Nets and followed him.

A Sermon Preached at St. Pauls,

554

COL. iii. 15.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful.

A Sermon Preached at St. Pauls Cross. Sir Richard Gurney being then Lord Mayor,

566

JER. xxxv. 18, 19.

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your Father, and kept all his Precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you.

Therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab the Son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever.

FINIS.
